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ON

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OF THE

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AND

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

# Some REMARKS on the Tragedy of the Lady JANE GRAY.

I Am very ſenſible, that it is an invidious Taſk to find Fault with Performances of this Nature, eſpecially if they have once met with the Applauſe of the Town; yet I can by no Means think, that an Error ought to influence any Man, tho' never ſo generally receiv'd; nay, on the contrary, the more the Error is ſpread, ſo much the greater I eſteem the Duty of the Lovers of Truth, to endeavour to undeceive the Miſtaken, and ſet Mens Judgments right, when the Fate and Merit of Arts and Sciences is concern'd in the Matter.

It is no difficult Thing to prove the Excellence of Tragedy, as we find it among the Ancients; whom, if we have not equall'd in this admirable Performance, it is becauſe we have either ignorantly or obſtinately refus'd to perſue the ſame Roads to Perfection, which the Ancients took. We have Reaſon to believe, that this Nation has produc'd, and may yet produce Men capable of all the Beauties of the

tent Judge of this Sort of Poem in the Management of the Theatre, it will be very difficult to perſwade the Writer to give himſelf a great deal of Pains and Study to arrive at Perfection, when he may pleaſe theſe Judges with ſo much more Eaſe.

That which has generally ſet People to work on Dramatic Pieces, has been the conſiderable Profit ſome Men have reap'd by them, without Regard to the Reputation that they may produce to the Poet among the Knowing.

*Horace* indeed was content *paucis Lectoribus*; and yet his Labour to pleaſe the few good Judges of his own Time, has made him admir'd by all the good Judges of all Nations and Ages ſince.

There is another Check to Art in Things of this Kind, Profit, and Reputation; I mean the preſent Applauſe is diſpens'd by thoſe who know little of the Matter, I mean the general Audience; and if a plauſible forward Perſon brings on a Play, and makes his Court to the leading Men of Figure, he ſeldom fails of Succeſs; but this is a Method ſo mean and ſlaviſh, that a Man of real Genius can never ſubmit to it. On the contrary, in *Athens* the Works of the Poets were judg'd by Men of Skill, and thoſe ſworn to do Juſtice to the Performance, without Regard to the Perſon.

Whilſt the Art of the Stage labours under all theſe Diſadvantages, it is no wonder that Poetaſters too often run away with the unjudging Town; and this brings on a Neceſſity of our looking into the Performances, to diſcover whether they have really any Deſert, or merit indeed our Contempt. This is the only Means of ever bringing our Stage to any Degree of Merit; and this has been the only Mo-

tive

ever shewn a great Indulgence to what he has done this Way; for they have always made it worth his while, tho' not always worth that of the Players.

I have been told, that on the first Edition of the following Criticism, he was pleas'd to say, I had knock'd him down like a Butcher, and not dissected him like a Surgeon. He therefore confesses, that I have knock'd him down; but as for dissecting him, he seems neither to know himself in what he writes, or the Aim and Business of a Surgeon in a Dissection. The Aim of this, is to discover the wonderful Texture of the inward human Frame, the Order, Harmony, and Use of the Parts, and their Correspondence to the whole, by which we arrive at a Discovery useful to the Subsistance of Man, and his Health, and to shew the admirable Oeconomy of that omnipotent Poet or Maker, who finish'd the Poem Man with such Beauty and Order; but sure no Body ever pretended to dissect a Heap of Rubish with any Thing but a Spade and Pickax. When Mr. *Rowe* will give us a Piece, in which there is Order and Harmony, I promise to dissect him as nicely as his Merit deserves, and allow him those Perfections I find in his Performance.

I was in Hopes, by the Words *forming his Fable*, and the like, in his Preface to the Lady *Jane Gray*, that this Opportunity was come of shewing my Commendation of his Performance; tho' I confess I had no Manner of Notion how he could turn and manage the Story of this unfortunate Lady, to make it a fit Subject for a *Tragedy*.

I *must confess*, (says he) *before those Papers came to my Hand*, (meaning those of Mr. *Smith* of *Oxford*) *I had intirely form'd the Design* or FABLE *of*

*my*

[illegible] *Play*. These Words gave me [illegible] use the first, second, and third Act [illegible] Hopes to find something of a *Fable*; but was miserably disappointed, and found not the Shadow of any such Thing through the whole.

Mr. *Rowe* is too good a Scholar not to be so conversant with all the Ancients, as to know what they meant by the Word *Fable*: Nay, those of *Æsop* alone would have given him a juster Notion of it; for they are all confin'd to some one Action of the Creatures introduc'd, and not of various Actions clapt together under one Title. Each of the Fables of *Æsop* is one Action, which naturally produces some one Moral; whereas this, which he calls a *Fable*, is a History of all that pass'd from the dying Moments of *Edward* the Sixth, to the Death of the Lady *Jane*.

I am sensible, that it would be to no Manner of Purpose to tell some Men, that *Aristotle* expressly condemns those Poems, whether *Epic* or *Dramatic*, which cram all the Lives, or Actions of particular Heroes, into one Design, and mentions the *Thesieds*, *&c.* even before his Time, contrary to the Practice of *Homer*. The same was among the *Romans*; *Virgil* only kept to the Limits of Action, whilst *Statius*, *Lucan*, *Silius Italicus*, *&c.* gave us Histories in *Verse*, and not *Epic Poems*.

But omitting the Authority of *Aristotle*, tho' founded in Reason and Nature, let us examine the Rationale of the Matter.

In the writing upon one Action, there is a visible Reason why the Poet should begin where he does, and no where else, and why his Poem concludes at the finishing of the Action propos'd. But in these *Historical Poems*, there is no solid Cause why the Poet should begin or end it at one Place more than another. But Examples will make this clearer.

*Shakespear*

written a Play, to which he [illegible] the Name of *Julius Cæsar*. This he begins just on the forming the Conſpiracy againſt him by *Brutus*, *Caſſius*, and the reſt. But there ſeems no Manner of Motive for his chuſing that Beginning; for by the Title, he might as well have begun with his Birth, which was indeed more agreeable to the Name, and then indeed we ſhould have expected he would have ended it with his Death. But as he has not done this in the Beginning, ſo does he not end it with his Fall in the Capitol, but continues it to the Death of *Brutus* and *Caſſius*, tho' there was no Manner of Reaſon why it ſhould end there, and not proceed to *Auguſtus*'s ſole Poſſeſſion of the Monarchy, or indeed down to the Time of *Auguſtulus*.

From hence it appears, that the *Unity of Action* is what makes a *Fable*, and forces a certain, neceſſary, and rational Cauſe of the Poet's beginning and ending his *Poem*.

From what has been ſaid, it is plain, that a *Poem*, which is a mere *Hiſtory*, has no *Fable*; and I think it is as plain, that a *Dramatic* and *Epic Poem* cannot ſubſiſt without a *Fable*. But the Lady *Jane Gray* has no *Fable*; it cannot therefore be a *Dramatic Poem*. It has not its eſſential Fundamental.

But a *Tragic Fable* has yet another Quality, which is, that it naturally produces *Fear*, or *Compaſſion*, or both; for it is not every *Fable* that is fit for a *Tragedy*.

Now, tho' this want of a *Fable* is ſufficient to condemn this Play of my Lady *Jane Gray*, as a worthleſs Performance, yet, ſhould we allow his *Hiſtory* to be a *Fable*, (which we never can, for the Reaſons aforeſaid) yet is not this *Hiſtory* calculated to move either *Fear* or *Compaſſion*, at leaſt to touch none but Uſurpers, and ſuch as aim to be ſo. We are not touch'd with what we cannot think our ſelves liable to. Now, I cannot ſee how the Audience can be terri-

fy'd

ſo'd with, ſeeing the Guilty of ſuch [illegible] *Uſurpation*, brought to condign Puniſhment, was guilty of *Uſurpation*, or ſhe was not; if ſhe was, then her Puniſhment was juſt, and no Body can regret the executing of Juſtice; if ſhe was not *guilty*, then it would move our Horror and Indignation, that Innocence ſhould be made unfortunate, and ſuffer without Cauſe.

But indeed he has made the Lady her ſelf argue enough againſt the *Uſurpation*, to make her guilty of ſo horrid a Crime; but it was to ſave her Country and Religion. If he brings this as a Chriſtian Example, he ſhould not have made her whom he deſigns a *Saint*, doing *Evil* that *Good* might come of it. Robbing on the Highway, and picking a Pocket, are far leſs Crimes, than uſurping another's Right in a Throne. She had no *Call*; here was no *Act of Parliament*, no *general Voice of the People*, no publick Choice of her pretended, but only the Will of a *Child*, too weak to prevail with any truly religious to hearken to. It is not a great deal of Cant of Religion, and the like, that is to be believ'd againſt Actions. There is nothing ſo eaſy, as to make Uſe of godly Words, if they would give *Virtue* and *Religion*.

The *Fables* for the *Stage*, ſhould be founded on ſuch Morals as may affect the general Audience; for then they afford a general Influence. Now, the giving Way to our Paſſions, is what every one is too much guilty of; to make us check them in their firſt Riſe, is the Leſſon taught by all the Tragedies of the Ancients, by ſhewing the Miſery brought on illuſtrious Perſons for want of that Caution.

Nor muſt the yielding to the Paſſions, be in Things ſcandalouſly wicked, which produce Crimes that a Man or Woman of Honour cannot think themſelves capable of incurring; for ſuch can afford no Leſſon; for we cannot but be touch'd with ſuch Misfortunes, as we

imagine

into our Selves. Thus [illegible] and ſuch Villainies in Men, as are too frequent on our Stage, have nothing to do here, their Puniſhment belong to the *Old Baily* and *Bridewell*.

Not to dwell too long on this *Play*, which in Reality has nothing in it worthy our Conſideration, as a *Dramatic Piece*, ſince it is plain it wants the *Eſſential*, a *Fable*: I ſhall draw to a Concluſion on this Head; only I muſt do Mr. *Banks* the Juſtice to think that he has come nearer to Nature than Mr. *Rowe*; he has hit it here and there, the latter never.

The Lady *Jane Gray* knows not of the King's Death in *Banks's*, 'till after the Wedding-Night, and its Joys are over; but in Mr. *Rowe*, from the Depth of Deſpair and Guilt, ſhe is oblig'd on a ſudden to marry; but indeed diſcovers nothing to have Poſſeſſion of her, but Gloomineſs and Deſpondence. He ſeems to be afraid, that a connubial Love in a young Lady of 15, ſhould leſſen her Character, but certainly without the leaſt Reaſon; for that is not a Blemiſh, but a Beauty. Mr. *Rowe* has made her do that out of a Care for her Country and Religion, which Mr. *Banks* has made her do for Love, and to ſave her Huſband's and his Father's Life.

If Mr. *Rowe* has been more favourable to the Lady *Jane*'s Character, Mr. *Banks* has been ſo to the Prieſts. Both *Plays* begin much in the ſame Manner, that is, with the Death of *Edward*, and end with the Execution of the Criminals.

*Guilford*'s Friendſhip tranſports him to the ſaving his Enemy and Rival, and one that, in what paſſes in the Play, has no juſt Claim to ſuch a tender Conſideration, eſpecially when the Life and Crown of his Beloved depended in a great Meaſure on the ſecuring of *Pembroke*.

But

But to defend the Faults [illegible] *Sentiments*, nay, and *Diction*, would [illegible] marks to a larger Size, than that of the Play it [illegible] which in general can only be corrected with *Bon* [illegible] *son's* Spunge.

Yet, with all its Faults, it is not worse than *Jane Shore*; but the *Whore* found more Favour with the Town, than the *Saint*.

Tho' I have ſpar'd the conſtant Similes upon Surprizes, and in the greateſt Guſts of Paſſion, (old Mr. *Ba-s's* Art) and the ſtrange out-of-the-way Thoughts and Expreſſions of this Piece; yet I cannot [illegible] wholly in Silence my Opinion of this Author's having had an Eye to Mr. *Young's* Poem, call'd *The Force of Religion*; *or*, *Vanquiſh'd Love*, without improving what Hints he took thence. But if any one has a Mind to ſee this Story of my Lady *Jane Gray*, told in a much more Poetical and moving Manner, than in this that is call'd a *Dramatic Piece*, he will find it in Mr. *Young's* Performance, who juſtly deſerves the Preference on this Subject.

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PRO

But

# THE PREFACE.

I *Know that it is the common Cry of the* Poetasters *of the Town and their Emtors, either through Ignorance, or in Complaisance to a present Vogue, That it is an envious, ill-natur'd thing to endeavour to expose the Pretenders to Wit and Poetry, who have, by Art, or better Luck than Men more meritorious, gain'd a transitory Applause with the Town. The Judges and Magistrates may, with full as strong Reason, be reproach'd with ill Nature in putting the Laws in Execution against a successful Thief, Cheat or Impostor; whereas there is nothing more just to Humane Society, nor more conducive to the fixing the Vigour and Health of the Public, than a rigorous Execution of the Laws; a Neglect of which is a certain Proof of a Luxurious Age, and of a People hastening to their utter Dissolution.*

*The same will hold in the Republic of Letters, if the Critics or Judges let every ignorant Pretender to Scribling pass on the World for a Man of Genius, and Art, there would be an end of all Excellence, and Art wou'd be no more heard of in the Kingdom of the Muses, whilst Ignorance and Impudence assume the Seats of Learning, and Modest Merit.*

*But to give the Reader a better Idea of Criticism, I shall transcribe some Part of what that great Genius, the late Earl of* Shaftsbury, *has said in Defence of it.*

A Legitimate and Just Taste can neither be gotten, made, conceiv'd, or produc'd, without the Antecedent *Labour* and *Pains* of *CRITICISM.*

For this Reason we presume not only to Defend the Cause of *Criticks*; but to declare open War against those indolent supine *Authors*, *Readers*, *Auditors*, *Actors* or *Spectators*, who making their HUMOUR alone the Rule of what is *Beautiful* and *Agreeable*, and having no Account to give of such their HUMOUR or *odd* FANCY, reject the *Criticising* or *examining Art*, by which alone they are able to discover the *true* BEAUTY and WORTH of every Object.

*In another Place this incomparable Author has these Words:* The WRITERS or AUTHORS in *Possession*, have an easier

Time than any *Ministry* or *Religious Party*, that is uppermost. They have found a Way by decrying *all* CRITICISM *in general*, to get rid of their *Dissenters*, and prevent all Pretences to farther *Reformation* in their State. The *Critic* is made appear distinct, and of another *Species*, wholly different from the *Writer*. None who have a GENIUS for *Writing*, and can perform with any Success, are presum'd so ill-natur'd and illiterate, as to endeavour to signalize themselves in CRITICISM.

'Tis not difficult however to imagine why this practical Difference between *Writer* and *Critic* has been so generally establish'd amongst us, as to make the Provinces seem wholly distinct and irreconcileable. The *forward* WITS, who, without waiting their due Time, or performing their requisite Studies, start up into the World as Authors, having with little Pains, or Judgment, and by the strength of Fancy meerly, acquir'd a *Name* with Mankind, can, on no Account afterwards submit to a Decrial, or Disparagement of those *raw Works*, to which they ow'd their early Character and Distinction. Ill wou'd it fare with them indeed, if on these precarious Terms, they shou'd venture upon Criticism; or offer to move that Spirit, which wou'd infallibly give such Disturbance to their establish'd Title.

Now we may conſider, that in our Nation, and eſpecially in our preſent Age, while Wars, Debates, and publick Converſations turn our Minds ſo wholly upon Buſineſs, and Affairs; the better Genius's being in a Manner neceſſarily involv'd in the Active Sphere, on which the general Eye of Mankind is ſo ſtrongly fixt, there muſt remain in the Theatre of Wit a ſufficient Vacancy of Place; and the Quality of *Actor* upon that Stage muſt of Conſequence be very eaſily attainable, at a low price of Ingenuity, or Underſtanding.

The Perſons, therefore, who are in Poſſeſſion of the *Prime* Parts in this deſerted Theatre, being ſuffer'd to maintain their Ranks and Stations in full Eaſe, have naturally a good Agreement and Underſtanding with their Fellow-Wits; Being indebted to the *Times* for this Happineſs, that with ſo little Induſtry, and Capacity, they have been able to ſerve the Nation with Wit, and ſupply the Places of real Diſpenſers and Miniſters of the MUSES *Treaſures*; they muſt neceſſarily, as they have any Love for themſelves, or fatherly affection for their Works, conſpire with one another to preſerve their common Intereſt of Indolence, and juſtify their Remiſsneſs, Uncorrectneſs, Inſipidneſs, and

down-

downright Ignorance of all literate Art, or just Poetic Beauty.

*Magna inter Molles Concordia.*

For this Reason you see them mutually Courteous and Benevolent; Gracious and Obliging beyond Measure; Complementing one another interchangeably at the Head of their Works in *Retrommendatory* Verses; or in separate Panegyricks, Essays, and Fragments of Poetry; such as in the *Miscellaneous Collections* (your yearly Retale of Wit) we see curiously compacted and accommodated to the Relish of the World. Here the *Tyrocinium* of Genius's is annually display'd. Here if you think fit, you may make Acquaintance with the young offspring of WITS, as they come up gradually under *the Old*, with due Courtship and Homage paid to those high Predecessors of Fame, in hopes of being one day admitted by Turn, into the noble Order, and made WITS by *Patent*, and *Authority*.

This is the young *Fry*, which you may see busily surrounding the grave Poet, or chief PLAYHOUSE AUTHOR, at a *Coffee-house*. They are his Guards, ready to take up Arms for him, if by some presumptuous Critic he is at any Time attack'd. They are indeed the very shadows

of their immediate Predeceſſour, and repreſent the ſame Features, with ſome ſmall Alteration, perhaps for the Worſe. They are ſure to aim at nothing above or beyond their Maſter; and wou'd on no Account, give him the leaſt Jealouſie of their aſpiring to any Degree or Order of acting above him. From hence that *Harmony*, and *reciprocal Eſteem*, which, on ſuch a Bottom as this, cannot fail of being perfectly well eſtabliſh'd among our Poets; The Age mean while, being after this Manner hopefully provided, and ſecure of a Conſtant and *like* Succeſſion of meritorious Wits in every kind.

If by chance a Man of Senſe, unappriz'd of the Authority of theſe high Powers, ſhou'd venture to accoſt the Gentlemen of this Fraternity, at ſome *Coffee-houſe Committee*, or while they were taken up in mutual Admiration and uſual Praiſe of their Natural and Cotemporary Wits, 'Tis poſſible, he might be treated with ſome Civility, whilſt he enquir'd, for ſatisfaction ſake, into the Beauties of thoſe particular Works ſo unanimouſly extoll'd. But ſhou'd he preſume to ſpeak in general—— "*Why is our* EPIC, *or* DRAMATIC, "*our* ESSAYS, *or* COMMON PROSE, "*no better executed? Or why, in particular,* "*does ſuch or ſuch a reputed Wit Write ſo in-*

"*correctly,*

" *correctly, and with so little Regard to Justness of Thought or Language? The Answer wou'd presently be given, that we* Englishmen *are not tied up to such rigid Rules, as those of the Ancient* Grecian, *or Modern* French Criticks.

" *Be it so (Gentlemen) 'tis your good Pleasure, nor ought any one to dispute it with you. You are Masters no doubt, in your own Country. But (Gentlemen) the Question here is not what your Authority may be over your own Writers. You may have them of what Fashion or Size of Wit you please; and allow them to entertain you at the Rate, you think sufficient, and satisfactory: But can you, by your good Pleasure, or the Approbation of your highest Patrons, make that to be either* Wit or Sense, *which wou'd otherwise have been Bombast, and Contradiction? If your Poets are still Mr.* BAYS's, *and your Prose Authors Sir* ROGERS, *without offering a better Manner, Must it follow, that the* Manner *it self is good, or the* Wit *Genuine? ——— What say you (Gentlemen) to this new Piece? ——— Let us examin these Lines, which you call shining! This string of Sentences, which you call* Clever! *This Pile of Metaphors, which you call* Sublime! ——— *Are you willing (Gentlemen) to stand the Test? Do you despise the Examination?*

"Sir, since you are pleas'd to take the Li-
"berty with us, may we presume to ask you a
"Question? —— Oh! Gentlemen, —— as many
"as you please; I shall be highly Honour'd. —
"Why then pray Sir inform us whether you
"have ever Writ? — Very often, Gentlemen,
"especially on a Post Night. —— But have you
"Writ (for Instance Sir) a Play, a Song,
"an Essay, or a PAPER, as by way of Emi-
"nence the current Pieces of our Weekly Wits
"are generally stil'd? —— Something of this kind
"I may perhaps (Gentlemen) have attempted,
"tho' without publishing my Work. But pray
"(Gentlemen) what is my Writing or not Wri-
"ting to the Question in Hand? —— Only this
"(Sir) and you may fairly take our Words for
"it, that when ever you Publish, you will find the
"Town against you; your Piece will infallibly
"be condemn'd. —— So let it. But for what
"Reason, (Gentlemen) for I am sure you
"never saw the Piece. —— No, Sir, but
"you are a Critic; and we know by certain
"Experience, that when a Critic according to
"Rule and Method writes, he is sure never to
"hit the English Taste. Did not Mr. R——
"who Criticiz'd upon our English Tragedy,
"Write a sorry one of his own? —— If he
"did (Gentlemen) 'twas his own fault not to
"know his Genius better. But is his Criticism
"the less just on this Account? If a Musician
"performs his Part well in the hardest Sympho-

"nies,

" nies, he must necessarily know the Notes, " and understand the Rules of Harmony, and " Musick. But must a Man, therefore who has " an Ear, and who has Studied the Rules of " Musick, of necessity have a Voice or Hand? " Can no one possibly judge of a Fiddle, but " who is himself a Fidler? Can no one judge " of a Picture, but who is himself a Layer " on of Colours. ———

Thus far our rational Gentleman perhaps might venture before our Coffee-house Audience. Had I been at his Elbow, to prompt him as a Friend, I shou'd hardly have thought fit to remind him of anything further: On the contrary, I shou'd have rather taken him aside, to inform him of this *Cabal*, and establish'd *Corporation* of Wit; of their declar'd Aversion to *Criticism*, and their known Laws, and Statutes in that Case made and provided. I shou'd have told him in short, that Learned Arguments wou'd be mispent on such as these; and that he wou'd find little success, tho' he shou'd ever so plainly demonstrate to the Gentlemen of this size of Wit and Understanding.

*That the greatest Masters of Art in every Kind of Writing, were eminent in the Critical Practice.* But that they really were so, witness among the *Antients* the greatest PHYLOSOPHERS, whose Original

Pieces

Pieces are intermixt with their profound *Philoſophical* Works, and other politer Tracts ornamentally writ for public Uſe. Witneſs in *Hiſtory* and *Rhetoric*, *ISOCRATES*, *DIONYSIUS*, *HALICARNASSEUS*; *PLUTARCH*, and the corrupt *LUCIAN*, himſelf; the only one perhaps of theſe Authors, whom our Gentlemen may, in ſome Modern Tranſlations have look'd into with any Curioſity, or Delight. To theſe, among the *Romans*, we may add *CICERO*, *VARRO*, *HORACE*, *QUINTILIAN*, *PLINY*, and many more.

Among the *Moderns* a *BOILEAU* and a *CORNEILLE* are ſufficient Precedents in the Caſe before us. They apply'd their *Criticiſm* with juſt ſeverity ev'n to their own Works. This indeed is a manner hardly practicable with the Poets of our own Nation. It wou'd be unreaſonable to expect of them, that they ſhou'd bring ſuch Meaſures in Uſe, as being apply'd to their Works, wou'd diſcover them to be wholly deform'd, and diſproportionable. 'Tis no wonder therefore, if we have ſo little of this *Critical* Genius extant to guide us in our Taſte. 'Tis no Wonder if what is generally current in this Kind, lies in a manner buried, and in diſguize under Burleſque, as particularly in

that

that witty Comedy [*THE REHEARSAL*] of a noble Author of this last Age. To the shame however of our profess'd *Wits* and *Enterprizers* in the higher Sphere of *Poetry*, it may be observ'd, that they have not wanted good Advice, and Instruction of the graver Kind, from as high a Hand in Respect of Quality and Character, since one of the justest of our Modern Poems, and so confess'd, even by our Poets themselves, is a short *Criticism* or *ART OF POETRY*, by which, if they themselves are to be judg'd, they must in general appear no better, than mere Bunglers, and void of all true Sense and Knowledge in their Art. But if in Reality, both *CRITIC*, and *POET*, confessing the Justice of those Rules of Art, can afterwards in Practice, condemn and approve, perform, and judge in a quite different Manner from what they acknowledge *just* and *true*, it plainly shews, that, tho' perhaps we are not indigent in *Wit*, yet we want what is of more Consequence, and can alone raise *Wit* to any Dignity and Worth, even *plain HONESTY*, *MANNERS*, and *sense* of that *MORAL TRUTH*, on which (as has been often express'd) *Poetic TRUTH* and *BEAUTY* must naturally depend.

*Qui*

*Qui didicit Patriæ quid debeat, & quid Amicis,*
*Quo sit amore Parens, quo Frater amandus & Hospes*
*Quod sit conscripti, quod judicis Officium*
*——— ille profectò*
*Reddere Personæ scit Convenientia cuiq;.*
Hor. de Arte Poet.

*The this might be sufficient to justify Criticism in General, and to expose Latitudinarian Scribblers of usurp'd Fame and Favour with the Town; yet this Noble Lord having given us such valuable Thoughts on this Head, and the present Occasion requiring all we can say to justify this Undertaking, I shall venture to Transcribe the Rest.*

*Odi Prophanum vulgus & arceo*, was in its Time, no doubt, a Generous *Defiance*. The Avant, was natural and proper in its Place; especially where Religion and Virtue were the Poet's Theme. But with our *Moderns*, the Case is generally the very Reverse: And accordingly the *Defiance* or *Avant* shou'd run much after this manner. ——— "*As for you Vulgar Souls,*
"*mere* Naturals, *who know no* Art, *were ne-*
"*ver admitted into the Temple of* Wisdom,
"*nor ever visited the Sanctuaries of* Wit *or*
"Learning, *gather your selves together from*
"*all*

" all Parts, and hearken to the Song, or Tale,
" I am about to utter; but for you Men of
" Science and Understanding, who have Ears
" and Judgment, and can weigh Sense, and
" scan Syllables, and measure Sounds; you,
" who by a certain Art, distinguish False
" Thought from True, Correctness from
" Rudeness, and Bombast and Chaos, from
" Order and the Sublime, away hence! or
" stand aloof! whilst I practice upon the
" easyness of those mean Capacities and Ap-
" prehensions, who make the most numerous
" Audience, and are the only Competent
" Judges of my Labours.

'Tis strange to see how differently the Vanity of Mankind runs in different Times and Seasons. 'Tis at present, the boast of almost every Enterprizer in the *Muses* Art, — " That by his Genius alone, and a
" natural Rapidity of Stile and Thought, he
" is able to carry all before him; that he plays
" with his Business, does Things in passing,
" and at a venture, and in the quickest period
" of Time. In the Days of *ATTIC Eloquence*, as Works were then truly of another Form and Turn, so Workmen were of another Humour, and had their Vanity of a quite contrary kind: They became rather affected, in endeavouring to discover the Pains they had taken to Correct; they were glad to insinuate how

labo-

laboriously, and with what Expence of Time, they had brought the smallest Work of theirs (as perhaps a single *Ode*, *Satire*, *Oration*, or *Panegyrick*) to its Perfection. When they had so polish'd their Piece, and render'd it so natural and easy, that it seem'd only a lucky Flight, a hit of Thought, a flowing vein of Humour, they were then chiefly concern'd, lest it shou'd in *Reality* pass for such, and their Artifice remain undiscover'd. They were willing it shou'd be known, how serious their Play was; and how Elaborate their Freedom and Facility, that they might, as the agreeable and polite Poet Glancing on himself,

*Ludentis speciem dabit, & torquebitur.*
Hor. Ep. 2. Lib. 2

AND

*Speret idem; sudet multum frustraq; laboret*
*Ausus idem; tantum series, junctura q; pollet.*
Arte Poetica.

Such Accuracy of Workmanship, requires a CRITIC's *Eye*, 'tis lost upon a Vulgar Judgment. Nothing grieves a *real Artist* more, than that Indifference of the Public, which suffers his Work to pass *Uncriticiz'd*. Nothing, on the other side,

rejoyces

rejoices him more, than the nice View and Inſpection of the accurate *Examiner* and Judge of Work. 'Tis the Mean *Genius*, the Slovenly Performer, who knowing nothing of *True Workmanſhip*, endeavours by the beſt outward Gloſs, and dazling Show, to turn the Eye from a direct and ſteady Survey of his Piece.

What is there that an expert *Muſician* more earneſtly deſires, than to perform his part in the preſence of thoſe who are knowing in his Art? 'Tis to the Ear alone that he applies himſelf, the *Critical* the nice Ear; let his Hearers be of what *Character* they pleaſe; be they naturally Auſtere, Moroſe, or Rigid; no matter, ſo they are but *Critics*, able to Cenſure, remark and ſound every Accord and Symphony. What is there mortifies the good Painter more, than when amidſt his admiring Spectators, there is not one preſent who has been us'd to compare the Hands of different Maſters, or has an Eye to diſtinguiſh the Advantages and Defects of every Stile? Thro' all the Inferiour Orders of *Mechanics*, the Rule is form'd to hold the ſame. In every Science, every Art, the *real Maſters* or *Proficients*, rejoyce in nothing more, than in the thorow Search and Examination of their Performances by the Rules of Art, and niceſt *Criticiſm*.

Why

Why therefore (in the Muses Name) is it not the same with our Pretenders to the Writing Art, our Poets, and Prose Authors in every kind? Why in this Profession are we found *Critic Haters*, and indulged in this Unlearned Aversion; unless it be taken for granted, that as *Wit* and *Learning* stand at present in our Nation, we are still upon the Foot of *Empiricks* and *Mountebanks*.

From these Considerations, I take upon me absolutely to condemn the Fashionable Custom of Inveighing against *CRITICS*, as the common Enemies, the Pests and *Beautefeus* of the Commonwealth of Wit and Letters. I assert, on the contrary, that they are the Props and Pillars of this Building, and that without their Encouragement, and Propagation, we shall remain still as *GOTHIC Architects* as ever.

*I shall give you but one Quotation more from this noble Lord, for should I transcribe all that he has Written Admirably on this Subject, it would make my Preface much larger than my Book. After having given us a Notion of the Antients, he proceeds in this manner:*

Our Modern Authors, on the contrary, are turn'd and modell'd (as themselves confess) by the public Relish, and current Humour of the Times. They regulate themselves by the irregular fancy of the

World, and frankly own, they are preposterous and absurd, in order to accommodate themselves to the Genius of the Age. In our Days, the *Audience* makes the *Poet*, and the *Bookseller* the *Author*; With what Profit to the *Public*, or what Prospect of lasting Fame and Honour to the *Writer*, let any one who has Judgment imagine.

But tho' our Writers, charge their Faults thus freely on the *Public*, it will, I doubt, appear from many Instances, that this practice is but a mere Imposture, since those Absurdities, which they are the aptest to commit, are far from being Delightful or Entertaining. We are glad to take up with what our Language can afford us, and by a sort of *Emulation* with other Nations, are forc'd to cry up such Writers of our own, as may best serve us for Comparison. But when we are out of this Spirit, it must be own'd we are not apt to discover any great Fondness or Admiration of our Authors; nor have we any, whom by mutual Consent we make to be our *Standard*. We go to *Plays*, as to other *Shows*, and frequent the *Theatre* as the *Booths*. We read *Epics* and *Dramatics*, as we do *Satires* and *Lampoons*; for we must of necessity know what Wit, as well as what Scandal is stirring: Read we

must

muſt, let the Writers be ever ſo indifferent; and this perhaps, may be ſome Occaſion of the Lazineſs and Negligence of our Authors, who obſerving this Need, which our Curioſity brings on us, and making an exact Calculation in the way of Trade, to know juſtly the Quality and Quantity of the publick Demand, feed us from Hand to Mouth; reſolving not to overſtock the Market, or be at the Pains of more Correctneſs or Wit, than is abſolutely neceſſary to carry on the Traffic.

*This Noble Lord has ſaid ſo much here, and ſo juſtly in the Behalf of* Criticiſm, *that I ſhall not preſume to add any more. But I cannot conclude without a Word about the following Criticiſm. The Reader muſt not expect ſo merry and good Entertainment here, as in the firſt Rehearſal; that noble Author had Works to expoſe, in which there was a ſprightly Dulneſs and Abſurdities that ran naturally into Ridicule. But the Works which are the Subject of our preſent Conſiderations, are ſo ſtor'd with a heavy Stupidity, that nothing has made them worth Notice, but the Succeſs they have moſt of them met with from the Town, eſpecially the laſt, which is yet the moſt Stupid, Abſurd, and Abandon'd of them all. There is ſo conſtant a Luſt of ſaying Nothing in a great many Words, that little Entertaining can be drawn from them.*

*I have therefore only taken this manner of Dialogue, to make the Remarks the more easily past thro', as being naturally more Amusing than the plain and regular Criticism. I do assure the Reader that I have not been prompted by either Ill-nature or Envy; I hope I am entirely free from both in my Temper; and indeed the Author, under our Consideration, has left no manner of room for the later; I cannot so easily clear my self of Disdain and Indignation.*

Si Natura negat facit Indignatio Versus.

# The Persons Names.

Mr. *Freeman.* — A Gentleman of a good Taste and Learning.

Mr. *Truewit.* — A Man of Wit and good Taste.

Sir *Indolent Easie.* — A Man of Wit, but one who is, or seems to be pleas'd with every Thing and every Writer.

*Sawny Dapper.* — A young Poet of the Modern stamp, an easy Versifyer, Conceited and a Contemner secretly of all others.

Mr. *Bays.* — A Pedantic, Reciting Poet, admir'd by the Mob and himself, but justly contemn'd by Men of Sense and Learning, and a despiser of Rules and Art.

Scene *the Rose Tavern* Covent-Garden.

A New

# REHEARSAL,

OR,

# BAYS the Younger.

## ACT. I. SCENE I.

*A Room in the Rose Tavern* Covent-Garden.

*Freeman* and *True-Wit.*

*Free.* WELL, *Dick*, Here's your welcome to Town. [*Drinks.*

*True. Joseph* I thank thee, there is nothing can make the Town more agreeable to me, after so long an Absence, than an Evenings Converse with thee now and then, disengag'd from all the Impertinence, which generally renders Conversation here so intolerable.

*Free.*

*Free.* Our Town Impertinence is at le
ſo much the more tolerable, than that
the Country, as it has more of Varie
and Pertneſs.

*True.* I ſhou'd as ſoon believe Pain we
to be render'd ſo by being of various kin
'Tis true your Coxcombs are more
than ours in the Country; but that re
ders them the more troubleſom and tal
tive; whereas a Country Fool may paſs,
his Silence, on us for a Man of Thought

*Free.* Oh! Sir, if your grave Sir be
your Gouſt, you may be furniſh'd with
Diſh or two every Night within the P
cincts of *Covent-Garden.* There is no
ſort of the Wits but are replenish'd wi
your ſolemn Liſtners, who with the
Nods keep Time to the Talkers, and
to Approve and Underſtand all that
ſaid.

*True.* Juſt as it was I find when I us
*Will*'s; but pray Sir does that Ancient Re
dezvous of the *Beaux Eſprits* hold
Ground? And do Men now, as formerl
become *WITS* by ſipping Coffee and T
with *Wycherly* and the reigning Poets?

*Free.* No, no, there has been gre
Revolutions in this State of Affairs ſin
you left us; *Buttons* is now the Eſtabli
*Wits* Coffee-houſe, and all the Yo
Scribblers of the Times pay their Att
here to intolerable.

*Free.* Our Town Impertinence is at le
ſo much the more tolerable, than that
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dance Nightly there, to keep up their Pretenſions to Senſe and Underſtanding.

*True.* And who and who honeſt *Jo*, are the Diſpenſers of Fame now? What bright Spirits entertain the Town with their Pens?

*Free.* Ah *Dick!* ſuch a Race of Poets, as never were ſeen or heard of before. A tolerable knack at Verſification ſets any Man up for an Author; but as for force of Genius, Art, Imagery, and true Senſe, they are ſtill thought very needleſs Qualifications in a Poet. Nay they are ſo very averſe to them, that whoever preſumes to advance any thing in their favour, is ſure to have all the Votes of the Houſe againſt him; for they think Ignorance is the Mother of *Wit*, and Poetry, as the Papiſts believe it the Mother of Devotion.

*True.* By this I find the Town is not yet much chang'd in their deteſtable Taſte; and I muſt confeſs, I always thought that there was hardly any where to be found a more inſipid Race of Mortals, than thoſe whom we Moderns are pleaſed to Complement with the Name of Poets, meerly for having attain'd the Chiming Faculty of a Language, with an Injudicious random uſe of *Wit* and *Fancy*.

*Free.* True; yet the Man who truly and in a juſt Senſe deſerves the Name of *Poet*,

and who, as a real Master, can describe both *Men* and *Manners*, and give to an Action its just Body and Proportions; as he is a very different Creature, so he will find less Esteem and Popularity.

*True.* Such a Poet, indeed, is a second *Maker*, like that Sovereign Artist or Universal Plastic Nature, he forms a *WHOLE*, Coherent and Proportion'd in it self, with the due Subjection of Subordinancy of constituent Parts; he Notes the Boundaries of the Passions, and knows their exactest *Tones* and *Measures*; by which he justly represents them, marks the *Sublime* of the Sentiments and Action, and distinguishes the *Beautiful* from the *Deform'd*, the *Amiable* from the *Odious*.

*Free.* But our present Authors, for the most Part, at least the most Taking and Celebrated of them, are not of this Kind. For whatever is Capricious and Odd, is sure to create Diversion, to those who look no farther; and where there is nothing like *Nature*, there is no room for the Troublesome part of *Thought* and *Contemplation*. 'Tis the Perfection of our Grotesque Painters, to keep as far from Nature as is possible; to find a Likeness in their Works, is to find the greatest Fault imaginable. A Natural Connexion is a *Slur*, a Coherence, a Design, a *Meaning*, is against their

their purpose, and destroys the very Spirit and Genius of their Workmanship.

True. *What things are these who wou'd be*
*Poets Thought?*
*By Nature not Inspir'd, nor Learning Taught.*

But this still keeps up to the Character of the Wits, as they have been all my Time; Fustian and Rant have past for the Sublime, and ———

*Free.* But those were Men of Spirit to our Scriblers now, their Tragedies wou'd make you Laugh heartily; but those of our chief Hero are so plentifully stor'd with Opium, that they make you sleep.

*Our King return'd, and Banish'd Peace restor'd,*
*The Muse run Mad to see her Exil'd Lord;*
*On the rack'd Stage the Bedlam Heroes roar'd,*
*And scarce cou'd speak one Reasonable Word.*

As a Noble Critic has observ'd; but the *Almanzors* and *Maximins*, had a sprightly flowing Verse, and often some good Topics, Reflections and Lines; but now you will be puzled to find one good Line in many Plays of our most taking Authors. They are infinitely more Absurd in their Plots, their Manners, and Sentiments, and yet do not make amends with the least

Proverbial Line or Sentence, that a Man can carry away to juſtify his having thrown away his Time and his Money in hearing and ſeeing them.

*Enter Drawer.*

*Draw.* Sir, there is Sir *Indolent Eaſie* below asks for Mr. *Freeman.*

*Free.* Oh! deſire him to walk up.

[*Exit Drawer.*

*True.* Pray who is this Noble Knight you have Invited up Stairs?

*Free.* Why, Sir, this ſame Sir *INDOLENT EASIE*, is a Man of Letters, and a Celebrated *WIT*; and tho' he has perform'd in Poetry with a great and juſt Applauſe, Judges, or Affects to Judge abominably: He is exceſſively Civil to all Authors; but whilſt he raiſes the Vanity of a Man of Merit by his Complaiſance to him, he mortifies him with the Praiſe of ſome Scoundrel Scribler of the Times, who has none. He is Friendly to the Unfortunate, and ſeems to take Pleaſure in giving Aſſiſtance to the Unhappy; and his Affectation of being diſpleas'd with nothing, makes every thing agreeable; I know nothing that he expreſſes any Averſion to but a *Critic*, tho' he has the leaſt Reaſon in the World to fear him himſelf. But paying a profeſſed De-

Deference to Succeſs, he thinks that ſufficient to determine the Goodneſs of any Performance: But here he is.

*Enter Sir* Indolent.

Sir *Indolent* your moſt Humble Servant.

Sir *Ind. Joſeph Freeman* yours ſincerely.

*Free.* Sir, *Indolent*, give me leave to recommend this Country Friend of mine to your Knowledge.

Sir *Ind.* Sir, I ſhall be proud to Rank you in the number of my Friends. Pray, Sir, what's your Friends Name? for I love to ſpeak eaſily and familiarly.

*Free. True-wit*, Sir *Indolent*.

Sir *Ind. Truewit!* A very Ancient Family I profeſs; but if I am not miſtaken, not very numerous.

*Free.* They have ſucceeded Son and Father, without any Brothers, Sir, for many Generations; but I fear the Family will be Extinct, if we prevail not with my Friend to Marry; he grows an Old Batchelor, and that is ill Policy in thoſe who muſt keep up a Name, leſt his Children fall into the Hands of Bad Tutors.

Sir *Ind.* Foregad I am no Enemy to Marriage; but for my ſelf I remain ſingle, becauſe I wou'd avoid all Diſquiet. But *Jo.* I left a Friend of yours below, who

will be glad to see you, when he has dispatch'd some Booksellers who teize him for Copy.

*Free.* Some Author by that; and a Modern Author, as the Commodity now goes is not so agreeable a Dish to my Friend and me, as you imagine Sir *Indolent*. But which of this Fry is it I pray you?

Sir *Ind.* Why honest *Sawny Dapper*, 'foregad, a very pretty young Fellow; he writes very agreeably, and is much in Vogue with the Town.

*Free.* Oh *Dick*! one of the most Empty and most Conceited of the whole Tribe.

Sir *Ind.* Nay, prithee dear *Jo.* be not so Ill-natur'd.

*Free.* Nay, prithee Sir *Indolent* be not so Good-natur'd, as to like every Pretender; you know better, and do a Mischief to Merit by your Civility to, and Caressing of such as have none.

Sir *Ind.* Nay, 'foregad *Sawny* has a very pretty Genius, is very Harmonious, and Writes a great many fine things, ask the Ladies else.

*Free.* The Ladies are wonderful Judges of Art, indeed, of which they know not one Syllabie; and as for Nature, it has been so corrupted by a course of ill Diet in Poetics, that they can draw no assistance from thence.

*True.* Give me leave, Sir *Indolent*, to deliver my Country Notion of this matter; you

you say he has a pretty *Genius*: To say nothing of the deminitive *Pretty*, a Genius alone is not sufficient to set up an Author. The Horse alone can never make the *Horseman*, nor the Limbs the *Wrestler* or *Dancer*; no more can a Genius alone make a *Poet*, or good Parts a *Writer*, in any considerable Kind. The Skill and Grace of Writing is founded in *Knowledge* and *Good Sense*. *Horace* has decided this long ago.

*Natura fieret laudabile Carmen an Arte*
*Quæsitum est; Ego nec studium sine divite Vena*
*Nec Rude quid prosit Ingenium video, alterius*
*Altera poscit Opem Res, & conjurat amice.* (Sic Hor.

*Some think that Poets may be form'd by Art,*
*Others maintain that Nature makes them so.*
*I neither see, what Art without a Vein,*
*Or* Wit *without the help of Art can do:*
*But mutually need each others Aid.*
ROSCOMMON's Version.

Sir *Ind.* I confess, Gentlemen, that were I to Write my self, I wou'd have a true and just Regard to both Art and Nature; but then I do it, because I find it very agreable to my Humour; I can't please my self without Order, and the Harmony of Parts. But 'foregad if the obtaining these Perfections were troublesom to me, I wou'd

not give my ſelf any Concern about it. Perhaps theſe poor Gentlemen find a difficulty in theſe Points, perhaps they cannot with all their Application attain them. Wou'd you be ſo unreaſonable to require that of them which they cannot do?

*Free.* Let them Continue then courteous Readers, and not preſume to Scribble, and aſſume an Air from a falſe ſucceſs, to make them greater Coxcombs than they would be without it.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad you're too ſevere, muſt none but Ciet-Cats have leave to ——— Scribbling's the Diabetis of the Mind; and when a Man's infected with it, he can't help clapping Pen to Paper, and then what enſues you generally find. Beſides, what need they take pains to arrive at Art, when they do their Buſineſs without it. What Plays have taken more than thoſe of Mr. *BAYS*, ev'n from his firſt Appearance to this day. If his Plays take, what wou'd you have more? And 'forgad I think the *Ambitious Stepmother* is an excellent Tragedy as Tragedies go now. Then here's his *Tamerlane*, *Ulyſſes*, *Fair Penitent*, and laſt and greateſt of All, *Jane Shore*. Who can contend with him? the Ladies admire them, the Lords encourage them, and every one goes to them, what wou'd you have more?

*True.* One Man of Learning, Art and Understanding, faithfully and sincerely declare his Approbation of any one of them: For I confess we in the Country were wonderfully supriz'd to find that they were so very well receiv'd, without any one Beauty through them all, that we cou'd find from the reading them.

Sir *Ind.* Nay, for the Reading them, I must own I never gave my self the Trouble to do that; I was satisfied with seeing them, and was active to promote the Author's Benefit on their being Acted.

*Free.* Well faith, Sir *Indolent*, you ought to do some Penance for such a supererogatory Transgression; especially since I know you have been slack enough in encouraging much better Performances, because they did not take so well. *True-wit*, Seat your self on the other side the Knight, whilst I secure him on this; I am resolv'd to mortify him with our Examination of them all, by which he shall see, what an Incubus he has hugg'd with so much Ardour, under the disguise of Success.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad, Gentlemen, I can't bear it, I must be gon, I have Business.

*Free.* You shall not stir one Foot, Sir *Indolent*, till we have perform'd the Operation — You are Master of so much good Sense, that it is an Act of Humanity to

cure you of the only monstrous failing you have. Come, 'tis in vain to struggle; submit patiently, and the Cure will be effected with the less trouble.

Sir *Ind.* Well, 'foregad if it must be so I will be patient; but handle my good Friend with as much tenderness as possible, I beg you.

*True.* Well, Sir *Indolent*, for your sake, we will not insist on Peccadillo's, we'll pass over his dull Insipidness, and a little heavy Nonsense or so, without any Notice, if that will satisfy you. We will begin with his first *Play*, from whence he deriv'd his Authority, only premising a few necessary Preliminaries; as to the Nature of Tragedy, on which we shall build our Criticisms.

Sir *Ind.* Well, Gentlemen, what you please.

*Free.* The Antients ——

Sir *Ind.* Phoo, What signify the Antients, since they are unknown to our Wits of a Court and Town Education, who can go no farther back into Antiquity, 'foregad, than their Pedigree can shew them. Besides Wit now is something like our Paper Credit; the Men of Business agree to give that the force of Money, and the Men of Pleasure, This the force of *Wit*. They are both arbitrary; but I have done, I only offer this by the way.

*Free.*

*Free.* I am not now talking to one of those ignorant Scriblers, who are forc'd to fly to Anarchy in Writing, because the eſtabliſhment of Order, Subordination and Harmony, wou'd put an end to their Pretences to Reputation as Authors. No, Sir *Indolent*, I am ſpeaking to a Man of Reaſon, a Man of Letters, a Poet, who has ſhown himſelf worthy of that Name, by his Performance.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad *Sir*, you do me too much Honour; but I'll take the Bribe and be ſilent.

*Free.* I mean no Bribe nor Complement, becauſe it is no more than Truth; but then I muſt tell you it aggravates your Fault in your Indulgence of every Scribler that appears.

Sir *Ind.* Alas! poor Men, they do their beſt. But Sir to your Point.

*Free.* I do perſuade my ſelf that you will allow, that the Perfection of whatever Art we derive from the Antients, is to be judged by the Antients and their Practice, who were the Founders of that Art. I will not deny but there may be Improvements made in an old Art, as we find in the Mathematics: But then they muſt be real Improvements, and not Things deſtructive of the very Art it ſelf. *Euclid* to this day is the Foundation of *Geometry*, and all the

Learn'd

Learned Books that have been written on that Subject, have been but a sort of Notes and Explanations of that Author, I mean as far as the Elements of that Art, which are still the same. I am not enquiring into the Modern Improvements of *Geometry*, they are Great and Noble, affording the most solid Grounds of a most rational Philosophy. But then the Modern Authors have not inverted the Ancient Art, acts not Diametrically, contrary to the Rules establish'd by *Euclid*.

*True.* This I take to be very plain, and therefore it needs not any further Proof. I farther think it pretty evident, that *Tragedy* was the Invention and Product of *Athens*, and that the Rules which *Aristotle* has given us, were Receiv'd and Establish'd in that City, they being indeed drawn from the Practice of the best of the *Athenian* Poets before his Time, and exactly agreeable to Reason and Nature.

Sir *Ind.* I can't deny the Fact.

*Free.* It is pretty Remarkable, that as all the Politer Arts had their Rise from this little Commonwealth, so they all Arriv'd to such a Perfection there, that no other Nation has yet been able to improve them. Their *Statues* is one Proof, which notwithstanding the Injury of Time, afford yet the highest Praise to that Master, who comes

neareſt

nearest to their Excellence; and this was the utmost Aim of *Angelo*, *Bernini*, &c.

*True.* I know not whether I am in the right or not, yet I am of Opinion, that the Addition made to the *Greek* Orders in Architecture, has added no Beauty to that Art.

*Free.* *Architecture* is perhaps founded on more Arbitrary Principles, than *Poetry*, *Painting*, and *Oratory*; in which I believe it wou'd be no difficult matter to prove the *Romans* never equal'd the *Greeks*; for indeed it is with great difficulty (if possible) that a Copier can reach the Original.

Sir *Ind.* The sum of what you aim at Gentlemen, by what you have said, seems to me to imply, that as Tragedy was a Poem invented and made perfect, and adorn'd with all its Rules of arriving at Perfection and Nature by the *Greeks*; if we will call ours by the same Name, and pretend it to be the same Poem, it must be judg'd by the same Rules?

*Free.* You take us, Sir *Indolent*, perfectly well, for that is what we design by all we have urg'd; and that I believe, Sir *Indolent*, you will grant us, without any farther Proof, as being a very reasonable Postulatum.

Sir *Ind.* Foregad, Gentlemen, I won't differ with you for Trifles; I must own what you say to be true. *True.*

*True.* From thence we shall only infer, that the Principal Care of the Poet ought to be employ'd in the principal part of the Poem, the *Fable*; and that any Play that is defective grosly in that, must be a detestable *Tragedy*; that next to that, the *Manners* are to be taken Care of, as that they be *Good*, that is, *Well-mark'd*, *Convenient*, *Like*, *Equal*, and *Necessary*, and that the Sentiments be the genuine and natural Result of the Manners, that is, such Thoughts as a Person endow'd with such Manners, under such Passions and such Circumstances, wou'd think; for the Temper of the Person gives different Sentiments of the same Things, and the same Circumstances. It is therefore the Poet's Business to enter into the Nature of the Character he draws, and give such Sentiments, as the Manners of the Dramatic Person require.

*Free.* The last thing, and of least Consequence is the Diction. But tho' it be of the least Consequence of any of the Essential parts of Tragedy, yet it must be allow'd of very great Moment; and the more, because we have no Example of any Man, who has been eminent for the other parts of this Poem, who has not likewise excell'd in the Diction, as *Homer*, *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, *Virgil*, &c. tho' *Aristotle* seems to have had some old Play, in his View,

when

when he ſuppos'd a good Tragedy might be without the force of Diction or Numbers.

*True.* In this Age, the Poet is oblig'd to take a more than ordinary Care of the Language; becauſe that is only capable of recommending his Play to the Town; tho', I muſt confeſs, it is no eaſy task to give them what they call fine Language, and at the ſame time, have the Beauty of *Fable*, *Manners*, and *Sentiments*; for the Perfection of the *Drama* being ACTION, (it being, indeed, the Imitation of an Action) thoſe Plays, that are moſt calculated for fine Speeches, have the leaſt, nay, little or no Action at all; or if at any time they have, the Poets are oblig'd to ſtretch their Entertainment to an unmeaſurable Length.

*Free.* I ſhall only add to what has been ſaid, that the End and Aim of *Tragedy*, is to move Fear or Compaſſion, or both; and therefore what ever Fable of a Tragedy is not Calculated for this End, is Faulty and not Tragical.

Sir *Ind.* Well, allowing all you have ſaid, for in Reaſon it appears to me but juſt; pray proceed to your Buſineſs, that I may paſs thro' my Torture the ſooner.

*Free.* To that we now come; the *Ambitious Stepmother*, the very Name of the Play is wrong; for Ambition is not properly a Dramatic Paſſion, it has too much of

Sedate-

Sedateneſs, 'tis too particular, it extends not to the general Life, as Anger, Curioſity, Raſhneſs, Obſtinacy, and the like, which render, by Indulgence, the Common or General Life of Man uneaſy, and often very Unhappy. But not to ſtand upon Trifles, where there are more Subſtantial Errors, let us go to the Plot or Fable. The Action imitated by the Fable, if there be any, is the Eſtabliſhing *Artaban* on the Throne of *Arſaces*; this, in it ſelf, can have nothing Tragical, unleſs it can be made to move, or does move Terror or Compaſſion, or both.

*True.* But I think it will be pretty plain, that this Fable, or Action, is not calculated for either of thoſe Views. The Story as well as I can reduce it to any form, is thus:

*Arſaces* King of *Perſia*, being on his Death Bed, his Wife *Artimiſa* (Widow to a great Lord of *Perſia*, who was Murder'd in Battle to make way for the King) in Conjunction with *Mirza*, the firſt Miniſter of State, and *Magas* Prieſt of the Sun, contrive to advance *Artaban* the Son of *Artemiſa* by the King, to the Throne, tho' the Eldeſt Son *Artaxerxes*, a brave and virtuous Prince, was Alive, and Meritorious of the Crown. This Prince and his Father-in-Law *Memnon*, and his Miſtreſs or Wife *Ameſtris*, return this

Day

Day from Baniſhment to *Perſepolis*, under the Advantage of a Sacred Holiday, on which every Body was ſafe by the Fundamentals of Religion. The Prieſt, the Queen, and the firſt Miniſter contrive to ſeize them in the Temple, to ſhock all the People with the Sacrilege, tho' they might have ſeiz'd them by the King's Authority (for all that we can ſee to the contrary) and ſo without any hazard or buſtle, might have been either ſent into Baniſhment again, or more decently diſpatch'd.

Well, they are ſeiz'd in the Temple, the Prince's Bride is forc'd from him by *Mirza*'s Order; the Old Fellow at that odd Time, having a mighty mind to a young bit of Fleſh, addreſſes to her the Minute after he was thought by her to have Murder'd her Father and Husband, and ſtruggl'd with by *Mirza*, who proving every way too weak, yet troubleſome, ſhe by good luck finds a Dagger by his ſide (but how it came there no body can gheſs) and ſtabs the prime Miniſter, who getting the Dagger again, ſhe having taken care to throw it down pretty near him, he makes *Orchanes* drag her to him that he may ſtab her, which the Ruffian, Captain of the Queen's Guard, does without any ſcruple. She is no ſooner ſtabb'd but reels out that *Artaxerxes* and *Memnon* might come in; *Cleone*, *Mirza*'s

Daughter,

Daughter, perfectly Virtuous, &c. falls in Love with *Artaxerxes*, and comes to set him at Liberty, killing herself to convince him of her Truth. So *Artaxerxes* and *Memnon*, coming into *Mirza*'s House by *Cleone*'s Key, found *Mirza* Dead to their Satisfaction; but soon *Amestris* returns to the same place, ready to drop down dead, having Bled all this while without any help; well, she comes in, tells her Fate and Dies; *Artaxerxes* stabs himself and Dies; and *Memnon*, that he might not be stab'd too, runs his Head against a Wall and knocks out his Brains. Thus all the Rivals of *Artaban*'s Power were remov'd; but he, on hearing of the Captivity of his Enemies, takes a freak to set them at Liberty, and revolts from his Mother, but comes too late; however he is very angry with *Artemisa*, and sets a Guard on her, assuring the Audience, That the Horrors of this Night shall guide his future Sway; he will not be Guilty of Sacrilege or Bloody Treachery, will keep all his Promises even to his Enemies, and the like; so that he is sure the Gods will walk Hand in Hand with him, and guard that Power they trusted to his Hand.

This is what we must call the Plot or Fable, which is indeed a strange kind of Medley, and has nothing either Rational

or

or Dramatic in it; it has no *Moral*, or none of any use; and is indeed directed by *Artaban* himself only to his own public Conduct, in which the Audience have not the least Interest or Concern; it moves neither Terror nor Compassion, nor are the Manners any way *necessary* to the end propos'd. Nay, *Mirza*'s Lust had nothing to do with the bringing *Artaban* to the Throne, but must have totally disappointed it, had not *Orchanes*, contrary to the Honour of a Soldier and a Man, villainously forc'd *Ameſtris* to the dying, prime Minister to be ſtabb'd; which was highly improbable, if not impoſſible, that *Orchanes* ſhou'd do, even for his own Intereſt, ſince he might have made better Terms for himſelf (which cou'd be the only motive of an Action to a Man of his Character) with *Artaxerxes*, than with a dying Villain, who by Conſequence cou'd do him no manner of Service.

*Free.* *Mirza* is repreſented as a Cunning Man, but his Conduct with *Ameſtris*, is the moſt ſilly, that an unruly Boy cou'd be guilty of. As his falling in Love at that Juncture, and his deſign'd Rape, were without any manner of Uſe to the Cataſtrophe or the Deſign of the Play, ſo was it manag'd like a Fool; his Age and Weakneſs in the Attempt, diſcover that he might

might have delay'd the Execution till a
was safe, and nothing cou'd contradict h
Will. He tells us it is but Lust mingled wit
Revenge; and then it was natural for him t
defer his salacious Entertainment for a few
Hours, when he might have taken a secure
way to his Satisfaction, ev'n by the Rules o
Common Sense, than by a Struggle wit
Youth prepossess'd against him by Love an
Hatred, the detestation of his Murder o
her Lord and her Father. Since the Au
thor was resolv'd to make him a Villain
He shou'd not have made him a Fool too
because he had call'd him a cunning Politi
Person. *Orchanes*, or many of his Dome
stics, who are always diligent in promotin
their Lord's Vices for their own Benefit
wou'd have held her, whilst the Impoten
Master might have nothing to do but t
take his beastly satisfaction of her. From
this and a living Prime Minister, the Capt
of the Guards might have assur'd himse
of some Reward, which he cou'd not ex
pect from dying *Mirza*. Humane Natur
is not so very depraved as to do Villanie
only for Villany's sake; so that *Orchan*
had not the least Reason to obey his cruelt
in his last Agonies of Life without an
Respect, since he did not know but *Arta*
*exxes* and *Memnon* had made their Escape
and so he might be punish'd for a Deed, fro
whic

which he cou'd expect no manner of Bene-
t. But indeed *Orchanes* is not puniſh'd at
ll, but goes off triumphant in the poſſeſ-
ion of his Place, for all that we can find
o the Contrary.

*True.* 'Tis plain that the Story of this
lay was taken from the Eſtabliſhing *Solo-
mon* on the Throne of *David*, by *Bathſheba*,
*Nathan* the Prophet, *Zadok* the Prieſt, *&c.*
And if the Poet had follow'd the Holy
Hiſtory more cloſely, there wou'd have
been no need of thoſe monſtrous Charact-
ers of *Mirza*, *Magas*, &c.

The plain Hiſtory is thus in the firſt
Book of *Kings*, Chap. 1. 5, 6. " Then *Ado-
" nijah* the Son of *Haggith* exalted himſelf,
" ſaying, I will be King, and he prepar'd
" himſelf Chariots and Horſemen, and
" fifty Men to run before him. And his
" Father had not diſpleas'd him at any
" Time in ſaying, Why haſt thou done ſo?
" And he alſo was a very goodly Man, and
" his Mother bore him after *Abſolom*. And
" he conferr'd with *Joab* the Son of *Ze-
" ruiah*, and with *Abiather* the Prieſt, and
" they following *Adonijah* helped him. But
" *Zadok* the Prieſt, and *Benaiah* the Son of
" *Jehoiada*, and *Nathan* the Prophet, and
" *Shimei*, and *Rei*, and the mighty Men
" that belong'd to *David*, were not with
" *Adonijah*. And *Adonijah* ſlew Sheep and
" Oxen,

" Oxen, and fat Cattel by the Stone of
" *Zoheleth* which is by *En-Rogel*, and cal-
" led all his Brethren the Kings Sons, and
" all the Men of *Judah* the Kings Servants.
" But *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Benaiah*,
" and the Mighty Men, and *Solomon* his
" Brother he called not. Wherefore *Na-*
" *than* ſpake unto *Batſheba* the Mother of
" *Solomon*, ſaying, Haſt thou not heard
" that *Adonijah* the Son of *Haggith* doth
" Reign, and *David* our Lord know-
" eth it not? Now therefore come, let
" me, I pray thee, give thee Counſel, that
" thou mayſt ſave thine own Life, and
" and the Life of thy Son *Solomon*. Go,
" and get thee in unto King *David*, and
" ſay unto him, Didſt not thou my Lord,
" O King, ſware unto thine Handmaid,
" ſaying, aſſuredly *Solomon* thy Son ſhall
" reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my
" Throne? Why then doth *Adonijah* reign?
" Behold, while thou yet talkeſt there
" with the King, I alſo will come in after
" thee and confirm thy Words. And *Bath-*
" *ſheba* went in unto the King, into the
" Chamber; and the King was very Old,
" and *Abiſhag* the *Shunamite* Miniſtred unto
" the King. And *Bathſheba* bowed and
" did obeyſance unto the King; and the
" King ſaid, What wouldſt thou? And
" ſhe ſaid unto him, my Lord, thou ſwareſt

" by

" by the Lord thy God unto thine Handmaid
" saying, Assuredly *Solomon* thy Son shall
" reign after me, and he shall sit upon my
" Throne: And now behold, *Adonijah* reign-
" eth; and my Lord the King thou know-
" est it not. And he hath slain Oxen, and
" fat Cattel, and Sheep in abundance, and
" hath called all the Sons of the King, and
" *Abiathar* the Priest, and *Joab* the Captain
" of the Host: But *Solomon* thy Servant
" hath he not called. And thou, my
" Lord, O King, the Eyes of all *Israel* are
" upon thee, that thou shouldst tell them
" who shall sit on the Throne of my Lord
" the King after him. Otherwise it shall
" come to pass, when my Lord the King
" shall sleep with his Fathers, that I and
" my Son *Solomon* shall be counted Offen-
" ders. And lo, while she yet talked with
" the King, *Nathan* the Prophet also came
" in. And they told the King, saying,
" Behold *Nathan* the Prophet. And when
" he was come in before the King, he bow-
" ed himself before the King with his
" Face to the Ground. And *Nathan* said,
" My Lord O King, hast thou said, *Ado-*
" *nijah* shall reign after me, and he shall
" sit upon my Throne? For he is gone
" down this day, and hath slain Oxen and
" fat Cattel, and Sheep in abundance, and
" hath called all the Kings Sons, and the

" Captains

" Captains of the Hoſt, and *Abiathar*
" Prieſt, and behold, they Eat and D
" before him, and ſay, God ſave
" *Adonijah*. But me, even me thy
" vant, and *Zadock* the Prieſt, and *Be*
" the Son of *Jehoida*, and thy ſervan
" *lomon* hath he not called. Is this th
" done by my Lord the King, and th
" haſt not ſhewed it unto thy Servant, w
" ſhall ſit upon the Throne of my L
" the King after him? Then *David*
" ſwer'd, and ſaid, Call me *Bathſheba*;
" ſhe came into the Kings preſence,
" ſtood before the King. And the Ki
" ſware, and ſaid, as the Lord liveth th
" redeemed my Soul out of all diſtre
" even as I ſware unto thee by the Lo
" God of *Iſrael*, ſaying, Aſſuredly *Solo*
" thy Son ſhall reign after me, and he ſh
" ſit upon my Throne in my ſtead; even
" will I certainly do this day. Then *Ba*
" *ſheba* bowed with her Face to the Earth
" and did Reverence to the King, an
" ſaid, Let my Lord King *David* live fo
" ever. And King *David* ſaid, Call
" *Zadok* the Prieſt, and *Nathan* the Pro
" phet, and *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoid*
" And they came before the King. An
" the King alſo ſaid unto them, Tak
" with you the Servants of your Lo
" and cauſe *Solomon* my Son to ride upo

" min

mine own Mule, and bring him down to *Gihon*. And let *Zadok* the Prieſt, and *Nathan* the Prophet anoint him there King over *Iſrael*: And blow ye with the Trumpet, and ſay, God ſave King *Solomon*. Then ye ſhall come up after him, that he may come and ſit upon my Throne; for he ſhall be King in my ſtead: And I have appointed him to be Ruler over *Iſrael* and over *Judah*. And *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoida*, anſwered the King, and ſaid, *Amen*: The Lord God of my Lord the King ſay ſo to. As the Lord hath been with my Lord the King, even ſo be he with *Solomon*, and make his Throne greater than the Throne of my Lord King *David*. So *Zadok* the Prieſt, and *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoiada*, and the *Cherethites*, and the *Pelethites* went down, and cauſed *Solomon* to ride upon King *David*'s Mule, and brought him to *Gihon*. And *Zadok* the Prieſt took an Horn of Oyl out of the Tabernacle, and anointed *Solomon*, and they blew the Trumpet, and all the People ſaid, God ſave King *Solomon*. And all the People came up after him, and the People Piped with Pipes, and rejoyced with exceeding great Joy, ſo that the Earth rent with the ſound of them. And *Adonijah* and all the Gueſts that were with him, heard

" it as they had made an end of Eating
" And when *Joab* heard the Sound of t
" Trumpet, he ſaid, Wherefore is th
" noiſe of the City, being in an uproar
" And while he yet ſpake, behold, *Jon*
" *than* the Son of *Abiathar* the Prieſt came
" and *Adonijah* ſaid unto him, Come in
" for thou art a Valiant Man, and bringeſt
" good Tidings. And *Jonathan* anſwered
" and ſaid to *Adonijah*, Verily our Lord
" King *David* hath made *Solomon* King
" And the King hath ſent with him, *Zadok*
" the Prieſt, and *Nathan* the Prophet, and
" *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoiada*, and the
" *Cherethites*, and the *Pelethites*, and they
" have cauſed him to ride upon the King's
" Mule. And *Zadok* the Prieſt, and *Na-*
" *than* the Prophet, have anointed him
" King in *Gihon*; and they are come up
" from thence rejoycing, ſo that the City
" rang again: This is the noiſe that ye
" have heard: And alſo *Solomon* ſitteth on
" the Throne of the Kingdom. And more-
" over, the King's Servants came to bleſs
" our Lord King *David*, ſaying, God make
" the Name of *Solomon* greater than thy
" Name, and his Throne greater than thy
" Throne. And the King bowed himſelf
" upon the Bed. And alſo thus ſaid the
" King, Bleſſed be the Lord God of *Iſrael*,
" which hath given one to ſit on my Throne

" this

this Day, mine Eyes even ſeeing it. And all the Gueſt that were with *Adonijah*, were afraid, and roſe up, and went every Man his way. And *Adonijah* feared becauſe of *Solomon*, and aroſe, and went, and caught hold on the Horns of the Altar. And it was told *Solomon*, ſaying, Behold *Adonijah* feareth King *Solomon*; for lo, he hath caught hold of the Horns of the Altar, ſaying, Let King *Solomon* ſware unto me to day, that he will not ſlay his Servant with the Sword. And *Solomon* ſaid, if he will ſhew himſelf a worthy Man, there ſhall not an Hair of him fall to the Earth: But if Wickedneſs ſhall be found in him, he ſhall Die. So King *Solomon* ſent, and they brought him down from the Altar, and he came and bowed himſelf to King *Solomon*; and *Solomon* ſaid unto him, Go to thine Houſe.

Sir *Ind*. 'Foregad I was almoſt aſleep with your long Scripture Story. But pray how to what purpoſe is it? What Uſe do you make of it?

*True*. 'Tis true, I might have given you the Story in fewer Words; but I thought that the noble ſimplicity of the Narration you'd pleaſe you, without any Conſideration of its being Scripture. The Reaſon of my telling it was to ſhow, that here is

the ſame Revolution effected, without any Villainous Characters, of which the *Step-mother* is full; and it wou'd ſurprize one that a Gentleman ſhou'd take his Fable from it, and Clog it with ſo many Abſurdities, from which the Original Fact is entirely free.

*Free.* Nay, the Original Story wou'd have furniſh'd nobler Occaſions, for the Paſſions, Deſcriptions, Topics, Reflections, and Sentences; tho' I am by no means of Opinion, that the Story, as it lies in the firſt of *Kings*, is at all Dramatic; yet, ſince he has Tranſlated the Scene from *Jeruſalem* to *Perſopolis*, he was ſo far Maſter of his Fable, as to make it truly Tragical; but if that cou'd not be effected, it was not his Buſineſs to have meddl'd with it at all.

*True.* He has one (among many) very odd Expreſſions, *When* Heroes *knock their knotty Heads together*; I can't imagine why a Hero's Head ſhou'd be eſſentially Knotty; the Heroes of Antiquity were not ſo, neither the *Achilles* of *Homer*, nor the *Æneas* of *Virgil*, nor any of the Dramatic Heroes of *Sophocles* or *Euripides*, had any ſuch Characters in thoſe great and admirable Poets. *Thoſe open and unſuſpecting Fools*, *Mirza* ſays of *Memnon*, tho' the Poet afterwards ſhews him ſo ſuſpicious of the Prieſt *Megas*, nay even of *Cleone*, that he cou'd give no Cauſe for this Imputation. *Free.*

*Free.* *Mirza* is indeed a Person of a peculiar Taste; for a Cunning Man to own himself a Rogue to the Man he shou'd keep in Ignorance, and whom he was to work to his ends, argues little pretence to that Name; but he laughs at *Honesty*, and professes himself a Knave to one he wou'd have Honest to him.

*True.* *Rochfacaut* was a Man profoundly Skill'd in Human Nature, and he says, a Knave has not Matter enough to make an Honest Man of. But Mr. *Bays* supposes Nature more put to it to make a Rogue, or what is all one, will have it, That Greater Parts and Understanding are necessary to compose a Villain than an Honest Man, and that he that thinks must be a Knave.

*Free.* Nay, he seems very fond of Rogues, since he has, without any Occasion, made his Priest so too, Sanctifying his Dissembling with his Function. But the Statesmen, Priests and Courtiers, are sure of his Good Word, they are all of a Batch, *The Devil a Barrel the better Herring.*

*True.* The Queen's first Speech is Monstrous, out of Nature, out of Character, fond of her Adultery in a long calm Sililoquy; nor do we know why she comes in, or why she goes out; But that is a common Fault of our Modern *Playwrights*, especially of Mr. *Bays* the Younger.

Act are extremely Boyish, when he tells his Mistress, That the Sun shou'd think her Eyes shou'd light the World in his Absence.

*True.* In the second Act, he talks of *Memnon*'s having recourse to Arms, of which Power we have not the least Word in the first: All that we know is, that he returns from Banishment on a day of Jubilee, when all was Safe and Free. The Queen and *Artaxerxes* call Names very handsomly in the second Act, which is extremely agreeable to their high Station.

*Free.* *Artaxerxes* in the third Act, gives a very merry Solution to the Fears of *Amestris*, and tells her, that if she fears Parting, why let them take a Touch together presently; but she is indeed very whymsical to fear the future Falshood of *Artaxerxes*, when he shall be cloy'd with Fruition. But he swares he will Feague her off for it, and that, when a Bed she shall give him Satisfaction.

*True.* Right —— and she is touch'd with this to the quick; for she tells him, asking Pardon of her Modesty, that she is ready, ay marry is the Buxom Jade, ready to dissolve, where she stands, with Pleasure. Oh the Luscious Rogue *Bays*.

*Free.*

by the Ladies of Honour and Chaſtity. I can't yet have done with *Mirza's* Amour, he is a pleaſant old Wag to attack a young Lady, who thinks that he has juſt Murder'd her Father and Husband as we have already obſerv'd; but he is but a ſilly ſcurvy Politician, to think to win her by Words under this Prejudice, and not ſay, Madam, I have not kill'd your Father nor Husband, they are both Alive and Well, and ſo may continue if you will ſave their Lives by yielding to me; if you will not, I will force you by the help of my Slaves, and then kill both you and one of them, and ſwear *Artaxerxes* did it, on finding you Naught with him; this Stratagem won *Lucretia* to ſuffer *Tarquin*. If ſhe had withſtood this Trial, the Stateſman had not appear'd ſo great a Coxcomb, as the Poet has now made him.

*True.* The very Scene of his ſtruggling with her is Comedy, 'tis like *Volpone* in the Fox, with the Wife of *Corvino*; it has nothing Tragical, but he ſeems fond of theſe Fantaſtic Scenes, he has repeated this in his *Jane Shore* betwixt her and *Haſtings*, tho' at beſt it gives an ugly Image, not fit for the ſight of Women of any tolerable Virtue.

*Free.* The Death of *Cleone*, is the onl Scene that moves any thing but Laught in the whole Play; and yet there is n manner of Reason, why she shou'd be s Unhappy; it is contrary to Poetic Justice and the Rules of Providence, nor of an manner of Use to the Plot or Catastrophe But *Cleone*, indeed, might have been lef entirely out, without any Injury to th Fable, I mean what we must here call th Fable.

*True.* There is as little Reason, that *A meſtris* or *Artaxerxes*, shou'd Die, both Sovereignly Virtuous, and yet Miserable.

*Free.* There is indeed nothing Tragical in this Play. The Punishments of *Mirz* and *Magas* give Satisfaction; The Death of *Cleone*, *Ameſtris* and *Artaxerxes*, provoke our Indignation, as having done nothing at all to deserve those Incredible Misfortunes; so that instead of *Fear* and *Pity*, the true aim of all Tragical Action, it moves only Horror and Satisfaction and indeed every where endeavours to abolish the Notion of particular Providence, and so is Impious. As for *Memnon*, I know not what he has to do in the Play at all; and as for his Death, it might have seem'd a little qualified by the Murder of *Cleander*, had he not clear'd himself, and prov'd, that he kill'd him in his own Defence:

fence: Besides, this Fact was not in the Play, nor had any Relation to the Action. The Queen, the Cause of all the Mischief, is safe in the Guardianship of a Dutiful Son.

*True.* All the Unfortunate Characters are good, and the most Fortunate the worst of the bad, as for *Artaban*, he is for having the Crown that is not his due; but he is for Fighting for it, he wou'd take it by Force, not Fraud. He differs from his Mother, *Mirza*, *&c.* as a *Highwayman* does from a *Pickpocket*, both are Felons; *Artaban* is the *Highwayman*, and *Artemisa* the *Pickpocket*.

*Free.* In short, this Murdering so many, shows the Weakness of the Poet's Genius; the Dagger being at hand to help out every Bungler. And it farther justifies the Reproach thrown on our Country by *Rapin* and some others, That we *Insularies* are delighted with Blood in our Sports, and to our Shame, our Tragic Poets every day confirm it; but none more, than your worthy Friend Mr. *Bays*.

Sir *Ind.* Well, I hope we may have a little Cessation now, and send a Glass about to Good Nature, for you have been sufficiently severe on this Piece of Honest *Bays*.

*Free.* I hope with Truth and Justice —— for where we have said one thing, the Play, under Consideration, afforded Matter

for Twenty; but to avoid Tediousness, we have but touch'd upon it. We have said nothing of his Language ———

Sir *Ind.* Nay, sure you'll allow him that for that Quality alone supports his Credit with the Town.

*Free.* I must needs say that I do not like his Language — he is every where *Loquax* but no where *Facundus*.

Sir *Ind.* Well, *Jo. Freeman*, here's Mr. *Bays*'s Health.

*Free.* With all my Heart, may his better Stars provide for him so well, that he may not be under any necessity of exposing his own want of Understanding in the Art he pretends to; nor the Town for being so often bit with his Commodities. I have no Hatred to the Man, I only am an Enemy to his Poetic Capacity, and I may say to him, what *Martial* said to *Cerdo*:

*Irasci nostro non debes Cerdo Libello*
*Ars tua non Vita est Carmine læsa meo.* Mart.

*True.* Well, Sir *Indolent*, we will not be so long on any of his other Plays; but this being his first, and that, on which he built all his after Authority, we cou'd not say less than we have, in Justice to the Art. Come, Sir *Indolent*, here is Mr. *Bays*'s Health and Prosperity.

Sawny

Sawny Dapper *opens the Door and comes in without any Ceremony.*

*Dap.* Ha! my dear Sir *Indolent*, yours; Ha! my good Friend *Jo. Freeman* yours; and you, Sir, I am your most Humble Obsequious Servant: What Wine are you Drinking? *French* I hope, or I can't Taste one Drop; I hope the *Bill of Commerce* will pass, that we may have it Cheaper---I am indeed an Enemy to the *Portugal* Trade, merely because I don't like their Wines.

*The End of the first Act.*

ACT.

# ACT. II.

## SCENE *the same Room.*

Sir *Indolent Easy*, *Joseph Freeman*, *Dick True-wit*, and *Sawny Dapper*.

*Dap.* WELL, I protest, I think 'tis a Glass of excellent Wine. Well and how and how, and what were you upon my dear Knight? on *Wit*, *Politics*, or *Religion?*

Sir *Ind.* Oh! for *Politics* and *Religion*, leave them to the Statesmen and the Clergy for they thrive so ill in their Hands, that I am affraid they wou'd be quite lost in our

*Dap.* I protest Pithy and Satiric enough Sir *Indolent*; well, then I find you have been upon *Wit*, as indeed what cou'd you have been on within the Air of *Covent-Garden* besides *Wit?*

*Free.* But Mr. *Dapper* we were upon *Poetry.*

*Dap.* Better still, I love *Poetry* with all my Heart. Why, Sir, I am a small Dabler in *Helicon* my self. [*To* True-wit.]

*True.* Doubtless, Sir, a great Proficient in the Art.

*Dap.*

*Dap.* Why faith I think ſo; yet I believe I may ſay, thanks to my own Induſtry, and my good Friends Applauſe, that I am got into the Front part of the Sons of *Parnaſſus*, and therefore I am ſorry I miſt your Diſcouſe of *Poetry*.

*Free.* But dear *Sawny*, it was Criticizing upon *Poetry*, which you, Gentlemen, that now entertain the Town in that way, are mortal Enemies to.

*Dap.* I muſt needs ſay that, if I had not written on *Criticiſm* my ſelf I ſhou'd not ſay much in its Praiſe; but I thought to do in my Progreſs to Poetry, as Mr. *Bays* the Elder did with his Prologues. I appear'd firſt in the Character of a *Critic in Terrorem* to the Reigning Wits of the Time, that they ſhou'd the more eaſily admit me into their Number: But then for their Encouragement, I writ in Rhime, and faith, to ſay Truth, as to Matter, not ſo far above them, as to make them fear that I ſhou'd not fall down to their Level.

*True.* I find, Sir, then, that there is a great deal of Art, as well as good Fortune, in attaining to the Honour of a *Wit*, or Poetic Author.

*Dap.* Oh! Sir, the greateſt Art in the World; for, Sir, if you truſt to mere Merit, you'll never be taken Notice of by the Town.

*True.*

*True.* I find then, Sir, that Merit is no more the way to Preferment in the Present State of *Parnassus*, than at Court; Interest with the Powerful, in both, supplies all manner of Defects.

*Dap.* True, Sir, pray to confirm this, give me leave to tell you how I came to this Authority which I now profess.

*True.* Strangely Ridiculous [*Aside*] —— By all means, Sir, pray proceed, you will infinitely oblige me, and I believe, *Freeman*, and Sir *Indolent*; I am a Country Gentleman, and it will be all Novelty to me.

*Dap.* Novelty, Sir; why then, Sir, it is *Wit*, and therefore must please every polite Person. *Novelty*, Sir, is *Wit*; for *Wit* at best without *Novelty*, will signify nothing in this Town.

Sir *Ind.* Prithee *Sawny* how does *Ned Doggrel* and Dr. *Scandal* do? 'Foregad they are very Facetious, Pretty Fellows; nay, the Doctor is a good *Scholar*. Prithee *Sawny* bring them to dine with me some day.

*Dap.* *Ned Doggrel* and Dr. *Scandal!* Why Sir *Indolent*, I wou'd have you to know I keep no such Company; the mere *Canaille* of Writers, who never were at *Button*'s or *Will*'s, or kept Company with a Gentleman of the *Covent-Garden* Air.

*Free-*

*Free. Aside to True-wit.* { Sir *Indolent* has ingeniously diverted the Fool from exposing himself, and he is not sensible of the Design.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad *Sawny*, I think they write very pretty Verses, as good as any of our present Authors, I mean in their way *Sawny*.

*Dap.* Ay, they may write, and write their Eyes out, before they arrive to my Reputation or my Conversation; they have not the Address of raising themselves by Art.

*Free.* Faith *Sawny*, I wou'd have thee set up to teach the Art of raising a Name by Poetry, without any.

*Dap.* As much a Jest as you mean that now *Jo*, it is in Fact, and I know not but it might be a good Project, and what I wou'd undertake, did not the Greek Poets lie on my hands now for a Translation.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad *Sawny*, I did not know that you understood *Greek*; nay, I must needs say, thou art a pretty Industrious Young Fellow.

*Dap.* Why, Sir *Indolent*, if I did not understand *Greek*, what of that; I hope a Man may Translate a *Greek* Author without understanding *Greek*; What d'ye think of *Josephus*, *Polybius*, and many more, whose Translators never cou'd read *Greek*? Ah!

Sir

Sir *Indolent*, you don't know half the Arts of getting a Reputation in this Town for *Learning* and *Poetry*.

*Free*. I find you are an Experienc'd Man this way Mr. *Dapper*, pray proceed in your Account, it must be surprizing.

*Dap*. Why, Sir, you must know for getting a Reputation for *Poetry*, there are some Qualifications absolutely necessary, as a happy knack at Rhime, and a flowing Versification; but that is so common now that very few do want it; then you must chuse some odd out of the way Subject, some Trifle or other that wou'd surprize the Common Reader that any thing cou'd be written upon it, as a *Fan*, a *Lock of Hair*, or the like.

*True*. As the *Lutrin* of *Boileau*, or the *Dispensary* of Dr. *Garth* I suppose.

*Dap*. Ah, Sir, that won't do; *Boileau* and *Garth* have treated of little things with Magnificence of Verse, as *Homer* did of the Frogs; but that is now Old, we must have something New; Heroic Doggrel is but lately found out, where the Verse and the Subject agree, as,

——— *My Lord, why what the Devil?*
*Zounds, Damn the Lock, 'foregad you must be*
*Civil;*
*Plague on't 'tis past a Jest; nay prithee, Pox*
*Give her the Hair* ———

If a Man wou'd diſtinguiſh himſelf, it muſt be by ſomething New and Particular. *Boileau* and *Garth* had arriv'd to ſo much Fame and Reputation in the former way, that there was no coming after them in the ſame Track; we therefore found out the *Heroic-Comical* way of Writing, that no Man ever thought of before.

*True.* That I dare ſwear. True, we have heard of *Tragi-Comical*, a very prepoſterous and unnatural Mixture, and now I think pretty well exploded; but for this *Heroic-Comical*, I confeſs it is new and more odd than the other.

*Dap.* Ay, Sir, and that makes it do. But, Sir, that is not enough, beſides the newneſs of the Verſe, you muſt have a new manner of Addreſs; you muſt make the Ladies ſpeak Bawdy, no matter whether they are Women of Honour or not; and then you muſt dedicate your Poem to the Ladies themſelves. Thus a Friend of mine has lately, with admirable Addreſs, made *Arabella F—— m——r* prefer the Locks of her Poll, to her Locks of another more ſacred and ſecret Part.

*Oh! hadſt thou Cruel! been content to ſeize*
*Hairs leſs in Sight*— or any Hairs *but theſe.*

But

But this is likewiſe a Complement to thoſe Parts of the Lady, to let the World know that the Lady had *Hairs* elſewhere, which ſhe valu'd leſs.

*Nor fear'd the chief th' unequal Fight to try,*
*Who ſought no more than on his Foe to Die.*

Admirable Good again, you know what Dying is on a fair Lady Sir *Indolent*, prettily expreſs'd, I vow, *than on his Foe to Die*. But then, Sir, the *Machinary* of this Poem is admirably contriv'd to convey a luſcious Hint to the Ladies, by letting them know, that their Nocturnal Pollutions are a Reward of their Chaſtity, and that when they Dream of the Raptures of Love, they are immortalizing a *Silph* as that Ingenious and Facetious Author ſweetly intimates in his Epiſtle Dedicatory, as the Book of the *Count de Gabalis* recommended explains it.

*True.* I have ſeen that moſt Ingenious Piece, in which I find ſomewhat extraordinary in the Contrivance of the Author. He Publiſh'd his Poem firſt without his *Machinary*, and afterwards with it, this is an extraordinary Method indeed. Now the Poets of Antiquity, founded their Poems on their Machinary; but I find it is the new way of Writing to invent the Machinary, after the Poem is not only Written but Publiſh'd.

*Da*

*Dap.* Alack a day, Sir, I find you are a perfect Country Gentleman indeed, to think that we new Authors care one Farthing for what the old Authors did; no, no, Sir, we know better things, we know how to purchase Fame cheaper.

*Free.* Why prithee *Dick*, every Age improves, why else does the World grow Older?

*Dap.* Improve, ay marry does it, nor ever were the Arts of getting a Name arriv'd to greater Perfection; why, Sir, I was fain to write a Copy of Verses in my own Praise, for none knew my Merit better than my self; then I put the Name of a Celebrated Old Author to it, but the Devil of it was, tho' that Author was of an Establish'd Reputation for *Wit*, yet he was remarkable for an ill Versification, so that my Stile discover'd me; and indeed, when I heard them prais'd, I cou'd not help owning to my Friends, that I writ them my self.

*True.* Why, faith Mr. *Dapper*, that's a new way indeed, and not very difficult; a Man might soon get Fame, if writing a Copy of Verses in his own Praise wou'd do it.

*Dap.* Phoo, Sir, that was but one step in my Advancement. You must know that there are two Parties of WITS, and two or three Men at the Head of them. Now I first

firſt fixt my ſelf on the good Nature and eaſy Temper (by my Application) of th Men of real Merit, they cry'd me up, re commended me to the Town, and th Town took their Words, and ſo I ſet u for my ſelf; for you muſt know, they can ſo eaſily deſtroy a Man's Reputation, a make it; then I gave my Approbation o the Works of the Heads of the other Party that is of thoſe who have Vogue and n Merit; by this means I gain'd all the Friends, and bring thoſe I approve, to ſort of Dependance upon me.

*True.* I proteſt, Sir, you are a great Politician I know not but you may make a Miniſter o State in time, if ever the Pretender ſhou come, by your Candour and Penetration.

*Dap.* Whoo! Pox you don't know m yet. Why t'other day I was deſir'd t read over *Jane Shore*, and what do you thin I writ upon it when I had done?

*True.* Faith I can't tell —— unleſs th it was the moſt Stupid Piece that ever wa Written.

*Dap.* Oh! gad, Sir, directly the contr ry —— I writ down on the Copy, Th *is the beſt Play that has been Written ſin* Euripides.

*Free.* Did you believe what you writ?

*Dap.* Egad, I can't ſay that in ſtri Truth I did, tho' *Conſideratis Conſiderand*

don't know but there might be ſomething
n it; but be that as it will I had my
nd in it, I complemented the Author, and
is Vanity receiv'd it as Sterling Praiſe,
ithout the leaſt Allay of Flattery; be-
ides, if it had been exactly true, I had
ot done it, for then it had been my Buſi-
eſs to have cry'd it down; but the leſs
eal Merit it had, the more ſervice I did
im, and ſo the better maintain'd my Au-
hority in the Diſpoſal of Fame.

*True.* Is this one of our Modern Methods
oo?

*Dap.* Oh yes, Sir, ever while you live,
he leſs Merit an Author has that applies
or our Commendation, the more we think
ur ſelves oblig'd to cry him up; for that
ultiplies the Votes againſt the *Critics*, who
ou'd tear us all to Pieces if they cou'd.
ut telling Noſes is now the Standard of
Vit, and the moſt Voices carry it, as in the
lembers of Parliament. Not but that we
ave ſometimes our Committees of Election
oo, that can make Three a greater num-
er than Thirteen; that is when our Oc-
aſions require it.

*True.* But *Sawny*, thou cou'dſt never have
ick'd out ſuch another Poet as *Euripides*, to
ention with the Author of *Jane Shore*;
he firſt is a Maſter of the Fable, Manners,
ntiments and Diction; we ſee Nature

and

and Art go Hand in Hand thro' all he Writes; neither of which were ever the leaſt known to the latter.

*Dap.* Whoo! a mere Baggatelle with us, Sir. But Sir *Indolent* is faſt aſleep —— Sir *Indolent*, Sir *Indolent*, come, here's a Health to the Lock leaſt in ſight.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad *Sawny* thou haſt talk'd me aſleep ——— But come the 'foreſaid Health, and the bright Poets that ſung it.

*Dap.* Egad, he is a bright young Fellow; you ſhall ſee a Play of his next Winter, that will Pit, Box, and Gallery it with a Witneſs. You muſt know, Sir, that the Name of *Jane* is now grown very Dramatic, and he's Writing a Play of the Lady *Jane Grey*. The Proteſtant Poet writes a Play on a Popiſh Whore, and the Popiſh Poet is to write one on the Proteſtant Queen.

Sir *Ind.* Of the Proteſtant Pretender you mean *Sawny*; but I ſuppoſe he concludes in Sacrificing her to the Popiſh Queen.

*Dap.* Nay, I heard a Bird ſing, that Mr. *Bays* himſelf, wou'd give him a lifting hand, or at leaſt a Commendatory Copy of Verſes.

*True.* I wou'd have you adviſe your Friend to conſider, the Writing of a Play is not like Writing a Paſtoral, or a looſe Copy of Verſes.

*But to write Plays; why 'tis a bold Pretence,*
*To Judgment, Breeding, Wit and Eloquence.*

And as for Mr. *Bays*, he does not know ſo much as what a Tragedy is.

*Dap.* Oh Lord! Sir, not Mr. *Bays* know what a Tragedy is, why, Sir, he has written five or ſix.

*True.* He has indeed written ſo many Things that he calls Tragedies, but not one true Poem of that ſort. You remember, Sir *Indolent*, that we have ſhown the *Stepmother* to have no one Quality of a *Tragedy*, give us leave to run over the reſt, and prove our Aſſertion.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad, Gentlemen, I had rather talk of Politicks or Religion, than hear an Honeſt Gentleman's Succeſsful Works thus taken to Pieces.

*Free.* Nay, Sir *Indolent*, you are in now, and muſt go thro' with the Operation, interrupted by the coming in of your Friend Mr. *Dapper*.

Sir *Ind.* Well, Gentlemen, you have me in your Power; but I beg you wou'd uſe me mercifully. *Sawny*, 'foregad give me ſome Snuff.

*Free.* The *Ambitious Stepmother* firſt got Mr. *Bays* a Name, and *Tamerlane* fixt his Reputation; we have ſeen what the former was,

was, let us now consider the latter. I
member that his Prologue takes care to
form us, that as *Virgil* sung *Æneas*, so
designs to sing *Tamerlane*, *tho' of much*
*equal Fame.*

*True.* That is, he writing a Dram
Poem, imitates *Virgil* who writ an E
one, extremely Judicious I profess. N
I have been such a Sot to imagine, th
there was a very material difference b
tween the *Epic* and *Dramatic* Poems.
*ristotle* and all the Critics had misled
but Mr. *Bays* has rectified my Judgment.

*Free.* In this indeed, Mr. *Bays*, has a gr
Number of our Moderns, who have sin
with him. For it is but an Error too co
mon in our Modern Tragic Poets, to p
pose some one great Character or Hero
the Poem, to Celebrate and Aggrand
above Humanity. On the contrary,
Antients propos'd a Moral, and regard
the chief Character or Hero, no farth
than the giving such Qualities and Frailt
to him, as were necessary to produce th
*Moral.* This Conduct was of some U
and Instruction. Our Poets only rais
great and accomplish'd Character beyo
Imitation, and to a degree more than ro
mantic; quite out of the way of practi
of the World. But the Ancient Drama
Poets exhibited this useful Lesson, —

by a too criminal and weak Compliance with the Impulse of violent Passions, we become unhappy, and that therefore we ought to have a watchful guard over our Passions in their Rise, that they may not by their Power in their full growth, make us their Slaves and Miserable. This is an End an Aim that reaches all Mankind; but the Modern Practice of little or no Use, or Concern at all. And indeed, this makes *Tragedy* the Imitation of a Man, which is establish'd by the Founders of the Art, as an Imitation of an Action that is Great and Grave, and so loses the most Important Consideration in a Trifle.

Sir *Ind.* I do allow your Reason just *Jo. Freeman*, and I do likewise allow that *Tamerlane* is of this number; yet 'foregad it was written with an Honest and True *English* Design, I mean, to pay a grateful Complement to K. *William*, who, I must still think, deserv'd the Gratitude of every *Englishman*, Poet, Divine, Tradesman, Gentleman and Vulgar; for every Degree receiv'd a Benefit from his coming into *England*; tho' 'foregad, I think the Divines, who were the most immediately oblig'd to him, are the most averse to his Memory, I mean for the Generality, who ridicule the Revolution; tho' had it not been for the Revolution, they had had no Livings at all before

this Time, unleſs they had qualified themſelves by quitting their Wives, and taking the Mark of the Scarlet Whore on their Foreheads.

*Free.* Why, Sir *Indolent*, you are warm, I thought nothing cou'd have ruffled your even Temper; I am glad to find you a Man, and that you have Paſſions, but they can never be more juſtifiable than on ſuch an Occaſion.

*True.* Sir *Indolent*, I am ſenſible that the Notion that this Play was a Complement to the King, did the Poet's Buſineſs; but I am as ſure, that King *William* deſerv'd a much more Noble and Heroic Character than is given here to *Tamerlane*; he appears like a General and a King, but acts like a Country School-maſter, or at moſt as an *Epictetus*, a mere Speculative Philoſopher.

*Dap.* 'Egad, what Company am I fall into? *Critics*, mere *Critics*, that are for Rules, and Reaſons, and Art, and the Lord knows what, which we have nothing to do with; at this rate, I ſhall not be allow'd a Poet my ſelf. 'Egad I'll ſteal off, and fetch Mr. *Bays* from the Houſe, to plead his own Cauſe. [*Aſide.*

[Dapper *ſteals away.*

*Free.* Nay, 'tis very Obſervable, that the Part of *Tamerlane* may be taken out, and the

Play remain as good as with it. He is
eed, as one has ſaid, a ſauntring talk-
Hero, that does nothing, and is no-
ng.

*rue.* As for that, you may take away
*neſes* and *Arpaſia* too, and never make the
worſe than it is, but better; for here
two very Unfortunate Characters, that
by no means deſerve to be ſo, as being
rely Innocent, perfectly Virtuous.

*ree. Bajazet* is all along a ſort of a Mad
n, and ſeems to have been brought up
*illinſgate*, for the *Dogs*, and the like
nes which he calls all about him. There
Play written on this Subject by one Mr.
*ders*, a young Gentleman about Nine-
, before which is a Prologue by Mr.
*den*, which is infinitely more in Nature,
more Pathetic; there the Scene between
*zet* and *Tamerlane* comes more within
compaſs of Humane Nature. But as
is the worſt of all thoſe which have
written on this *Tartar* Conqueror, ſo
t been the moſt Succeſsful.

*rue!* But Sir *Indolent*, the Complements
by Tragedy have been in another man-
among the Antients, not in the Cha-
er of the Hero, as in the *Oedipus Celo-*
of *Sophocles*, and the *Ion* of *Euripides*,
nout deſtroying the Nature of the
ma.

*True.* Then what an impoſſible Inciden
is that Conſpiracy of *Omar* and the *Deroiſe*
the midſt of a Camp, and in the Priſone
Apartment, where even the General
*Tamerlane*'s Army is ſav'd from Deat
only by eſcaping in a Diſguiſe.

*Free.* I appeal to you Sir *Indolent*, is the
any one Scene, any one Speech, any o
Line, that moves you thro' the whole Pla
and here, as well as in the former of t
*Stepmother*, neither Pity nor Fear are touch
We are ſatisfied with the Puniſhment
the Offenders, and angry at the Suffering
of *Moneſes* and *Arpaſia*, that is, ſuppoſi
that we are at all inveſted in any of t
Events; for I confeſs I am not, for what
out of Nature, never touches me at all.

Sir *Ind.* Nay, for my part, I am no Judg
of theſe Affairs, I go no further than t
Diction, and that I think the Poet has pe
form'd to a Miracle.

*Free.* I am ſorry, Sir *Indolent*, that I ca
not go ſo far as you, ev'n in that; the A
thor has endeavour'd to imitate *Milto*
ſtile in his *Paradice Loſt*, which is admi
ble in the *Epic*, but not at all agreeable
the *Dramatic* Poem: And therefore *Mil*
himſelf Writes quite in another Manner
his *Sampſon Agoniſtes*.

Sir *Ind.* Well, 'foregad Gentlemen, I wi
you had done this ill-natur'd Work; ſ

'm quite tir'd with it, 'tis quite out of my way: I am not Supervisor of the Stage, nd therefore the convincing me will be of o manner of Benefit to the *Drama*. If I an serve any Gentleman, that is so unfortuate to Write, I will.

*True.* But, Sir, it is to bring you to Juice to those very few that have or may Write well; that you may not favour Pretenders, who gather Assurance from your miles, because they know you to be a Man f establish'd Merit.

*Free.* Well, Sir *Indolent*, to please you e will say no more of *Tamerlane*, even for he lame Complement intended by it to ur glorious Monarch: Tho' it wou'd be a ery easy matter to prove, that there scarce ver was a worse Play, except the *Royal onvert* of the same Author.

*True.* Nay, now I must joyn with Sir *ndolent*, to desire you to pass that over, ith the *Biter*; for I do not remember so uch as one Scene through the whole.

*Free.* I do confess these Plays are below riticism, they are fenc'd round with Stuidity, and dispence such a Dullness all round, that it wou'd be impossible to go hrough with them and keep awake.

*True.* The only Criticism they deserve, s a Spunge dipt in Ink.

*Free.* Well, Sir *Indolent*, giving but Word or two on *Ulysses*, and the *Fair P nitent*, we will, with as few on *Jane Sho* diſmiſs you in Peace.

*True.* I ſhall be the more tender of *Ulyſſ* becauſe it is by much the beſt of his, an has a ſort of a Face of Tragedy. Th Poet indeed has left it without any Mora he has made *Semanthe* unfortunate witho any demerit. He has taken all *Ithaca* fo his Scene, which, by as good a Reaſon might have been extended to all *Greece*, an ſo to all *Europe*, nay, indeed, to the whol Earth. He has introduc'd I know not ho many Kings with the Manners of Scou drels or Porters; he has been fond, adm ring *Penelope*'s Beauty at Forty odd. He h made *Ulyſſes* put *Penelope* to an unneceſſar and unjuſt Tryal, not at all conducive t the Plot, nor agreeable to the Wiſdom, o Gratitude of his Hero. But theſe, and great many more Abſurdities of the De ſign, Conduct, and indeed of the Sent ments and Diction, I will ſacrifice to you good Nature; and to the weak Appearanc of a Tragedy, which he has in no other o his Performances.

Sir *Ind.* They ſay 'tis an eaſie thing to fin fault; 'foregad I think it is the hardeſt thin in Nature; I am ſure I ſhould have rea and ſeen *Ulyſſes*, an hundred Times, befor

I cou'd have diſcover'd the third part of the Faults you have produc'd; and yet you wou'd perſuade me that you are ſilent as to the Reſt, in Complaiſance to me, and the uncommon Merit of the Play.

*True.* Why, Sir *Indolent*, to ſatisfy you that I had made a Conſiderable Sacrifice to you in this, I will give you the Faults of *Ulyſſes* more at length; nor abridge you of their Number.

Sir *Ind.* Nay, Sir, 'foregad I'd rather thank you for your Complement, than ſtand the Tryal of the Reality. I pray proceed.

*Free.* The *FAIR PENITENT* was built on a much better Play of *Maſſinger*'s, call'd the *Fatal Dowry*. The Poets are equally guilty of making their Heroine a *Whore*; but the latter Poet has made her more unpardonable and obſtinate, and ſtill leſs worthy of Pity. *Charolois* in *Maſſinger* reſents the Incontinence and Injury to his Bed like a Man of Honour; yet will not puniſh her till her Father had heard the Cauſe, and decided it againſt her; and when the Father's Juſtice had Condemn'd her, the Husband ſtrikes the Dagger into her Boſome: This makes Nature return to her Father, and his Grief for the untimely loſs of his only Child, produces a very noble, and natural Scene. But in Mr. *Bays*, the Husband is a true tame Cuckold, tho'

an *Italian*, and is for forgetting all that's paſt. But the Father is implacable, and will admit of no Compenſation; in ſpight of all the Pleas of Nature, and even the Husband's Indolence in deſiring to ſit down contented with her as ſhe is: If ſhe had been a Maid it had been better; but ſince it was, as 'twas, why good Man he wou'd take up with her as he had, *for better or for worſe.*

*True.* To ſay no more of this *Italian* *NIKY*, we will only read you a Prologue deſign'd for this Play, by a Gentleman, who by writing it only on an hearſay Account of the Tragedy, was miſtaken in two or three things, but ſuch as common ſenſe wou'd excuſe him in. As that the Husband ſtab'd her, as who cou'd have expected leſs from an *Italian Cornudo?*

*A Prologue ſent to Mr.* Bays, *to his new Play call'd the* Fair Penitent; *deſign'd to be ſpoken by Mr.* Betterton, *but refus'd.*

Eſt & in obſcenos deflexa Tragedia Riſus.

QUacks *ſet out Bills,* Jack-Pudding *makes* (*Harangues,*
*And Thief at* Tiburn *ſpeaks before he hangs.*
*I pray you then give Ear to what I ſay,*
*For this to me is* Execution Day.

*The*

*The Stage is* Tiburn; *Boxes, Gallery, Pit,*
*Where you our Judges, and our Hangmen ſit,*
*Of Nonſenſe tender, but ſevere to Wit.*
*To Day we fear you not, we've hit your Taſte,*
*And when that's pleas'd we cannot ſure be Caſt.*
*Meanly contented with the vulgar Way,*
*Some make the Heroine Virtuous in a Play:*
*But the bold* Tragic Genius *of our Stage,*
*With Novelty reſolves t'oblige the Age,*
*And with an* Heroine PUNK, *the Ladies*
*(will engage.*
*He from the* SOC *the Proſtitute tranſplants,*
*And ſwells the humble* WHORE *with buskin'd*
*(Rants.*
*His Whore indeed repents the ſlippery Fault,*
*But, like the Reſt, it is not till ſhe is caught.*
*She is not ſorry that ſhe has play'd the* Whore,
*But that, diſcover'd, ſhe can do't no more.*
*Thus while his* PUNK *in Buskins boldly ramps,*
*Like* * Bajazet, *his* HERO CUCKOLD *ſtares*
*(and ſtamps.*
*He with no Laurel Wreaths his Brow adorns,*
*But while thoſe vulgar Ornaments he ſcorns,*
*Above his Brethren he exalts his Horns.*
*Confederate Cuckolds then come Clap this Play;*
*Our* Lucky *Bard to you devotes this Day.*
*No* Doodle, Daſhwood, Wiſeacre *is here;*
*Nor any of the puny Race, that us'd to appear;*

* This was a miſtake, for the Hero Cuckold is very tame.

The CUCKOLD now assumes an haughtier Air,
* With Brandish'd Dagger stabs the yielding Fair,
So little Womans Frailty is his Care.
Ye horned Herd from Wapping to White-Hall,
Approach in Tryumph, he invites you all;
So strong a Party made, he need not fear his Fall.
Some envious Critic here perhaps exclaims,
If you shou'd punish thus the City Dames;
You'd make a Desolation in the Land,
And Barrs, and Counters wou'd unfurnish'd stand
But, Ladies, you with Ease, that Fear remove,
If you use Caution in the Thefts of Love;
Since only she, that's caught, this Punishment will prove.
Danger adds Fewel to the amorous Fire,
And Difficulties only raise Desire.
Besides—past Merits you shou'd not despise,
When † Solomon, and ‖ William in Disguise,
From his lov'd Pen regal'd your Ears, and Eyes.
What tho' nor Art, nor Nature there were found
He scorns by Art or Nature to be bound.
Let others toil beneath the Load of Thought,
Of what is just, what natural, what not;

* Another mistake from the nature of an Italian Husband, who was very likely to do so.
† Artaban. ‖ Tamerlane.

They'r

*They're dull mechanick Things below Regard,*
*From such a bold, and such a lucky Bard.*
*Uncumber'd with those Fetters, still he'll write,*
*Whilst* Ignorance *assures his hoodwink'd Flight.*
*He fears no Danger, for he none foresees;*
*In happy* Ignorance *secure to please,*
*Without those forreign Aids, th' indulgent Town,*
*With Heroes and with Language,* All his own.
*The Hooded Falcon so, in haste let fly,*
*Tours swift aloft undaunted to the Sky*
*With upright Wing, till lost to human Eye.*
*From Thrones he* sauntring, talking HE-
(ROES *chose,*
*But for an* active HEROINE *now rakes the*
(*Stews;*
*And whence he'll fetch the next* —— he on-
(ly knows.
*Yet* * CRESSWEL *sure of infamous Renown,*
*Or some more Antique Matron of this Town,*
*May reasonably next invoke his Pen*
*To do her Justice in his* LOFTY SCENE.
*Nor can she sure his* LOFTY SCENE *disgrace*
*Since* BAWD, *in Breeding, still of* WHORE
(*takes Place.*
*For* BAWD's *arriv'd to the* grave Doctor's
(*state,*
*While* WHORE *is but an* Undergraduate.

---

* An Eminent vulgar Bawd, of about Thirty Years ago.

BAWDS *maudlin Tone from penitential Cart*
*( Like* Thespis *founder of the Tragick Art )*
*Must have the Force to move each amorous*
*( Heart.*

*But what is it that Poets cannot do?*
*Caress'd by* US, *and so extoll'd by* YOU?
*T'encourage Merit nobly you disdain,*
*It is* pedantic, *and below your Vein,*
*And faith to tell the Truth, we love our Gain.*
*As with the Saints, so 'tis, we find, with you;*
*For here alas! th'* ELECT *are very Few,*
*And those without your Reason, by your Will*
*( sav'd too.*
*The less of proper Merit they can boast,*
*The more secure they are from being lost.*
*While Farce and Bombast best can please the*
*( Age,*
*We'll Cook no other Dishes for the Stage.*
*When to your Smiles just Poets you admit,*
*And flock in shoals to Nature and to Wit,*
*All Poetasters then we will discard,*
*And here encourage only the true Bard.*
*For sure in us it must seem Impudence*
*To cherish Merit, and to play good Sense,*
*When from* your *Taste we hope for all our*
*( Pence.*

Sir *Ind.* Malicious enough 'foregad —— but what signifies all this, you find the Play pleas'd, and the Satire is forgotten.

*Free.*

*Free.* The Play was forgot till its ſecond Part of *Jane Shore* reviv'd it with a ſecond Edition. But I will ſay no more of this Play, but what may juſtly be ſaid of all thoſe with which this Author has yet viſited the Town——— That Nature, Character, and Deſign, are wholly unknown to him; that a ſort of ſonorous numerous Verſe, very empty of Senſe and Poetry, is what has rais'd him a Name, and that the juſteſt Criticiſm on this and others, wou'd be once more, a Spunge dip'd in Ink.

*Re-enter* Dapper.

*Dap.* Well, Gentlemen, have you yet got over *Criticiſm?* I proteſt 'tis the moſt ingenteel thing in the World, Men of Poſite Parts never mind it, or indeed know any thing of it, only Poets who have written without Succeſs, and thoſe who never durſt write at all, make a Pother with it againſt the Taſte of the Town, and the Favours it beſtows on us its brighter Spirits, who know how to pleaſe it.

Sir *Ind.* Dear *Sawny* here's a Bumper, (which I do not uſe to drink) here's Honeſt Mr. *Bays*'s Health, I wiſh he were here to plead his own Cauſe.

*Dap.* I'll pledge you Sir *Indolent*, he's only giving the Players an Account of a new Play that he's about, and he'll kiſs your Hands;

Hands; I told him you were here, and he longs to repeat ſome Lines of his to you, you are a Candid Judge.

*True.* I ſhou'd be glad to ſee the Man; is he made like other Men? For I am ſure he thinks like no Man alive but himſelf.

*Dap.* Ah! Sir, you talk like a Country Gentleman, Sir, the whole Town thinks like him Sir, and all the Wits of the Town Sir that have any Name think like him, Sir,——

*True.* Why faith Mr. *Dapper*, if all the Town thinks like him, it is a very Senſeleſs Town; and your *Wits* ought to be ſent to improve and learn Nature in *Lapland*, for their Songs to their *Rein-deer*, have much more of *Poetry* and *Nature*, than any thing I have ſeen of this great Author's; but here's his Health, Sir.

*Enter Drawer.*

*Draw.* Sir *Indolent Eaſy*, Mr. *Bays* is in a Box below, and deſires to ſpeak a Word or two with you.

Sir *Ind.* Deſire him to walk up.

*Draw.* Sir, he deſires you wou'd ſtep down to him.

Sir *Ind.* Well, I'll wait on him.

[*Exeunt Drawer and Sir* Indolent.

*The End of the Second Act.*

ACT

# ACT. III.

*Sawny Dapper*, *Freeman*, and *True-wit*.

*Dap.* MR. *Freeman*, I proteſt I have a great eſteem for you, and I wiſh you wou'd abate of that Ill-nature you have ſhown againſt Mr. *Bays*, and the taking Poets; for you muſt know that we all take it for Envy.

*Free.* I am not at all concern'd, what you Gentlemen Writers think of my Good or Ill Nature; but Truth and Art, are what I value before all Men, when they are the Subject of my Diſcourſe, and I ſhall never ſacrifice them to the Succeſs of any Coxcomb in Vogue.

*Dap.* Why, Sir, you may be a *Critic* ſtill, and not diſoblige the Town by condemning what it likes.

*Free.* As how, Mr. *Dapper*?

*Dap.* Why I am a *Critic* my ſelf —— but then I write always in Praiſe of what is cry'd up by the Town; by that I oblige the Authors, and get the Reputation of a well natur'd Fellow, free from Envy, Malice, and the like. Have you not ſeen a *Review of* Jane Shore?

*Free.* Yes marry have I, Sir; but what of that, honeſt well-natur'd *Sawny*?

*Dap.*

*Dap.* Why, I my ſelf writ that gentle Piece of Criticiſm; and I think I have there ſhown, that I underſtand Art as well as the ſevereſt of you all.

*Free.* Did you write that wonderful Piece Mr. *Dapper?* I proteſt I thought that the Bookſeller had written it himſelf.

*Dap.* Oh! no, Sir, the Bookſeller, ha! ha! ha! not but Mr. *Lintot* is a very Ingenious Perſon, and I hope by his Printing Mine and Mr. *Bays*'s Works, to make him a formidable Rival to *Jacob Tonſon*; 'tis true Mr. *Lintot* did give me ſome Hints, but as to the Writing it was all my own.

*Free.* But *Sawny*, how came you, a Scholar, not to know the difference between a *Tragedian* and a *Tragic Poet*, for you call Mr. *Bays* very often a *Tragedian*.

*Dap.* Hum! 'Egad a Tragedian! why a *Tragedian* or *Tragic Poet?* it is all one in the *Greek*.

*True.* No faith, Sir, neither in *Greek* or *Latin*, nor any other Language that I know of.

*Dap.* Phoo! that's but a Trifle, a *lapſus Calami*, a little overſight that we Authors don't much regard; but, Sir, as to the Reaſons, the Arguments, and the Diſcoveries of ſuch Beauties of the Poet, theſe ſhow the Genius of a true Critic, and I hope I have diſcharg'd that part like a Man of Taſte.

*Free.*

*Free.* Why faith *Sawny*, if thou can'ſt hear Truth, I cannot diſcover even that; I mean, I cannot find that thou haſt either defended thy Author like a Man of Art, or diſcover'd one Beauty in him.

*True.* Nay, don't blame Mr. *Dapper*, for the laſt, for he muſt be more than a Critic, that can diſcover Beauties where there are none; and if he has defended him ill, it was becauſe the Author was not capable of a good Defence; it has not been Mr. *Dapper*'s Fault in my Opinion.

*Dap.* 'Egad, Sir, you are a very Civil Perſon, and I am your very Humble Servant —— Faith I ſaid all I cou'd for him, and I hope ſome things that will bear the Teſt.

*Free.* I ſhou'd be glad to hear them honeſt *Sawny* for thy ſake, As how?

*Dap.* Why firſt, I ſhow that the Characters are Tragical, and then that the Play carries a Moral Inſtruction; nay, I do pretend to aſſert, that the Poet's Conduct is of a piece thro' the whole *Drama*.

*True.* In that you are certainly in the Right, for the Poet's Conduct thro' the whole, muſt by all Men, that have ſeen or read the Play, be own'd to be of a piece, that is, every where Faulty; the chief Character, which is *Jane Shore*, is no Tragical Character.

*Dap.*

*Dap.* How, Sir, not Tragical! Why Sir, the Foundation of many Ancient Tragedies, is plac'd upon Rapes, Murders, Incests, Parricides, and such Crimes, which give a shocking Idea to the Soul; and their Punishment cannot be said to have so proper an Influence on the Audience, because the Vices are in themselves so Enormous and Remote from common Practice, that the Moral cannot reach home to the Conscience of the Hearer.

*Free.* Honest *Sawny*, thou art out in every Particular; for there is not one Play of the Antients that is extant, and mention'd in Authors of those Ages, which is built on any such Foundation.

*True.* A Whore profess'd, is no Tragick Character, *Incontinency* in Woman being on the same Level with *Cowardice* in Man; and Mr. *Bays* might as well have brought a Coward for his Hero, as a Whore for his Heroine.

*Dap.* What do you think of the *Phædra* of the Antients, if she was not an Incestuous Whore it was none of her Fault, she was willing tho' *Hyppolitus* was not.

*Free.* That indeed is the most questionable Character that way among the Antients. Yet is this perfectly clear from being a Whore, and Adultress by choice. *Phædra* has all the Reluctance of a Woman of

Honour

Honour to the Crime, and ſtruggles with it to the utmoſt, even almoſt to Death; this Criminal Paſſion was a Puniſhment inflicted on her by the Gods. But honeſt *Sawny*, you muſt not take your Notion of *Phædra* from that on our Stage by a late Author, where ſhe is Abandon'd enough indeed, to become almoſt a Parallel to *Jane Shore*; but you muſt look into *Euripides*, and then ſee if there be any thing like it; you will find the Modeſty of the Character nicely preſerv'd, which *Seneca* and Mr. *Smith* have both abominably debas'd.

*True*. *Jane Shore*, on the contrary is an habitual Whore and Adultreſs, and even in her ſuppos'd Reformatiou, keeps up her Intimacy with *Haſtings*'s Whore Mrs. *Alce*.

*Free*. *Helen*, is indeed the Heroine of one of the Tragedies of *Euripides*; but this is not the Adulterous *Helen* that was ſeemingly at *Troy*; but the Virtuous and Chaſt *Helen*, who had been all the *Trojan* War in *Pharos*, Mourning the Abſence of her dear Lord and Husband *Menalaus*, and maintaining her Virtue, againſt the Power of King *Theoclymenes*.

*Dap*. But, Gentlemen, may not Circumſtances make a Vicious Character the Object of Pity? As from the Strength of the Temptation, the natural weakneſs of the Offender,

Offender, or the Power and Influence of some other Person in the Commission of the Crime.

*Free.* No bright Quality can balance a Vice that is Scandalous, as Incontinence in a Woman, and Cowardice in a Man.

*True.* But *Jane Shore*, had she been Innocent of this Crime, had been no Tragic Character, for her Station of Life was too low; a Shop-keepers Wife of the City never can rise above the Soc; and her having lain with the King and two or three Lords will never be thought ennobling enough to fit her for the Buskin, since that very Crime renders her entirely incapable of it.

*Dap.* But then she is Penitent for this Crime, has a due sense of her Guilt, and shows a suitable Compunction for her Offence, which makes her the Object of Mercy, that is, Pity.

*True.* Penitence may move our Joy, but can never touch our Compassion; and the price of lost Reputation can never be paid unless that cou'd be restor'd, which never was, nor ever can be.

*Dap.* But then she wou'd not yield to *Gloster*'s Wicked Design of putting aside the Young King.

*Free.* It is not sufficient to move our Compassion, that one that has been Guilty of a Scandalous Vice, will not be Guilty of a more Enormous Wickedness. *Dap*

*Dap.* 'Tis true she is an Adultereſs, but then her fellow offender was a Monarch.

*True.* As for her fellow offender being a Monarch, that takes not away the Scandal of the Fault, but adds the guilt of Ambition to that of Luſt; and here I muſt obſerve, that Mr. *Bays* makes *Jane Shore*'s Virtue produce her Miſery, and not her Vice. Whereas the ancient Tragic Poets made the Hero's Vices produce their Misfortunes. It was the Obſtinacy, Raſhneſs and Curioſity of *Oedipus* that made that diſcovery which render'd him entirely miſerable; but *Jane* is ſo, becauſe ſhe will not add another Wickedneſs to her former.

*Dap.* Well, I do not know what fault you may find with the Character, it is plain the Ladies like poor *Jane* never the worſe for being a Whore, which I think is Defence enough of Mr. *Bays*, againſt all the Malice of his Critics.

*Free.* But honeſt *Sawny*, the Ladies have been us'd of late to ſuch Food, that they have not that Niceneſs it were to be wiſh'd.

*True.* I can't find by the Play that *Jane* is really a Convert, till the Minute that *Gloſter* orders her to be turn'd out to Starve. She is intimate with none but her old Companion in Wickedneſs, who is ſtill Whore to *Haſtings*, who our Caſuiſts wou'd think a very odd Companion for a Penitent; for it

is

is with them a certain ſign that the Repentance is not ſincere and true, when the Penitent is fond of, and does not entirely relinquiſh his Companions in habitual ſins. And indeed *Jane* herſelf remembers her *Paramour* with a very unpenitential Imagery.

*'Tis true the Royal* Edward *was a Wonder,*
*The goodly Pride of all our* Engliſh *Youth;*
*He was the very Joy of all that ſaw him,*
*Form'd to delight, to love, and to perſuade.*
*Impaſſive Spirits, and angelic Natures*
*Might have been Charm'd like yielding hu-*
*(mane Weakneſs,*
*Stoop'd from their Heav'n, and liſten'd to his*
*(talking ——*

What cou'd ſhe have ſaid more warmly and more wantonly, had ſhe been juſt yielding to his Luſt? To leſſen her own Frailty, ſhe tells her ſiſter Whore, that *Edward*'s Tongue was enough to corrupt the Angels themſelves to be *Carnaliter'd* by him. A rare Penitent indeed, and much deſerves our Pity.

*Free.* Nay, ſhe ſeems under ſome Concern that her Form is not ſo bright as it was formerly.

*My*

*My Form alas! has long forgot to please:*
*The Scene of Beauty and Delight is past.*

that poor *Jane* ſtill thinks it Delight to
Wicked ———

*No Roſes bloom upon my fading Cheeks,*
*Nor laughing Graces wanton in my Eyes;*
*But haggard Grief, lean-looking ſallow Care,*
*And piercing Diſcontent, a rueful Train*
*Dwell on my Brow, all hideous and forlorn.*

this the Language of a Penitent? As
h ſhe ſhou'd rather have deſcrib'd the
uty of the Mind, the ſatisfaction of a
nverted ſtate, and the Charms of a
venly Spouſe: Whereas all that ſhe ſays,
ms to place her Pain in that her Plea-
es are paſt Recall.

*True. Jane*'s laſt Speech in the firſt Act is
ther proof that ſhe repents not her
ultery; for ſhe complains of the hard
e of Womankind, that they can't Whore
h the ſame ſafety to their Reputations,
Mankind can.

*Mark by what partial Juſtice we are Judg'd:*

tial Juſtice, by the way, is an extraordi-
y Epithet, he might as well have ſaid,
Mark

Mark by what unjuſt Juſtice we are J
but this is a Pecadillo.

*Such is the Fate* unhappy *Women find;*
*And ſuch the* Curſe *entail'd on Wome*

Here poor *Jane* thinks it *unhappy*, nay
*Curſe*, that Women have not the Liber
roving ——

*That Man the lawleſs Libertine may rove,*
*Free and unqueſtion'd through the wilds of*
*While Woman, Senſe, and Natures eaſie F*

the laſt Line I take to be abſolutely u
telligible.

*If poor weak Woman ſwerve from Virtue's*
*If ſtrongly Charm'd ſhe leave the* Thorny

The poor penitent *Jane*, ſtill think
Paths of Virtue a thorny Way.

*And in the ſofter Paths of Pleaſure ſtra*
*Ruin enſues, Reproach and endleſs Shame,*
*And one falſe ſtep entirely damns her Fa*
*In vain with Tears the Loſs ſhe may depl*
*In vain look back to what ſhe was before,*
*She ſets like Stars that fall, to riſe no mor*

*Dap.* That's wonderfully fine, *She ſets like Stars that fall to riſe no more.*

*True.* Very fine Nonſenſe! that is, She ſets, like that which does not ſet at all.

*Dap.* Mr. *Bays* had made it ſhe ſets like falling Stars that riſe no more; but he did me the Favour to take my Correction in that Line.

*True.* I never heard of Stars, that fell, except in the *Revelations.* But is it not ſtrange that Mr. *Bays* ſhou'd think a Whores Fame irretrievable, and yet imagine ſhe cou'd be a fit Heroine for a Tragedy.

*Dap.* Can there be any thing finer than *Dumont*'s deſcription of the lovely ſolitude he had found out for her.

*Free.* 'Tis very pretty; nay, ſo pretty, that I wonder *Jane* did not immediately take Poſt to it, and leave the Court with *Dumont*; for being ſo well provided for, ſhe had no Motive at all to Petition *Gloſter.* Beſides, ſhe had Reaſon to believe that *Hastings* wou'd ſoon ſhow his Reſentment againſt *Dumont*; ſo that every thing in Nature bid her fly, and nothing cou'd perſuade her to ſtay but her being loath to leave her old Haunts; ſo that all the Miſchief came upon her, becauſe ſhe wou'd not be happy when ſhe might: But indeed poor *Jane* is a very whimſical, fooliſh, maudlin Character from the Beginning of the Play to the End.

*True.* Mr. *Bays* has ſinn'd againſt the *Likeneſs* in this Character, and given her Virtue, which Hiſtory does not warrant. She is a Whore to three upon Record; and how many more Gallants ſhe might have had in private and of lower Degree we can't tell.

*Dap.* But as ſhe is repreſented by the Poet in his Play, ſhe had but one, and that a Monarch. — She reſiſts *Haſtings* a Man of great Quality and Power.

*Free.* She reſiſts one unprepar'd and unexpected attempt, at leaſt till *Dumont* ſends him away with a Flea in his Ear: But what wou'd have happen'd if her Husband in diſguiſe had not been near, we can t tell. *Haſtings* is a very ungenerous Lover, to preſs for the laſt Favour at firſt daſh; for ſpeaking one good Word for her to *Gloſter*. And indeed it is no great Argument of her Virtue that ſhe deny'd him; for a Woman muſt be a very abandon'd Whore indeed that wou'd let a Man get up and ride at the firſt offer.

*True.* It is really a very merry Tragedy, there are but ſix Men and two Women in it; the two Women are Whores, and three of the Men Villains, one a Cnckold, and another a Debocher of young Ladies, only *Bellmour* is nothing at all.

*Free.*

*Free.* Mrs. *Alce* is a falſe diſſembling Bag-
age, to wheedle poor *Jenny* out of her
rinkets and not to give her a bit of Bread
or them.

*True.* So that ſhe's a Cheat as well as a
Whore, and ſo much the more unfit for a
ragic Character.

*Free.* The Scene between *Haſtings* and
*lice*, is a lame Copy of that between *Do-*
*mant* and *Loveit* in Sir *Fopling*, and only
t for Comedy.

*True.* And the Scene between *Haſtings*
nd *Jenny* at Midnight, ſeems taken from
hat in the Chances, where *Don John* is for
aking a Touch with *Conſtantia* in the Street,
e's ſo hot and eager he can't ſtay till he
ets to a Houſe; theſe give filthy Idea's,
nd are only fit to be acted in a Brothel, and
ot before Ladies of Honour and Virtue.

*Free.* *Alice* begins the Third Act with a
ilioquy of Eighteen Lines, to tell the
udience what ſhe is going to do with the
aper and its Contents, but this is a Trifle.

*True.* The change of the Paper is indeed
notable Contrivance, and worthy Mr.
*Bays*'s great Genius.

*Free.* I thought, by what *Jenny* ſaid when
he came in, in this Act, that ſhe had been
oing to beg for *Dumont*, but ſhe is begging
piece of Bread.

*A poor, undone, forſaken helpleſs Woman*
*Intreats a little Bread for Charity,*
*To feed her Wants, and ſave her Life from*
*(periſhing*

*True. To feed her Wants*; that is, to keep them ſtill Alive, whereas I ſuppoſe ſhe wou'd be underſtood to remove her Wants.

*Dap.* Why, look'e Gentlemen, I made the Objection to Mr. *Bays*, that I thought he ſhou'd have made *Jane* Petition for *Dumont*; but he told me, that wou'd have ſpoil'd the Plot, by letting *Gloſter* know, that *Haſtings* and ſhe were not on ſo good Terms as he imagin'd.

*True.* I find that Mr. *Bays* the Younger, has two Qualities like Mr. *Bays* the Elder, his Admiration of ſome odd Books, as *Reynard the Fox*, and the Old Ballads of *Jane Shore*, and the making Simile's in the midſt of a Paſſion, and after a Surprize.

*Let no nice Sir deſpiſe our hapleſs Dame,*
*Becauſe recording Ballads chant her Name;*
*Thoſe venerable Antient Song Inditers,*
*Soar'd many a pitch above our Modern Writers*

I hope Mr. *Bays* ſpeaks for himſelf, and then he does thoſe Ancient Song Inditers

but

but Juſtice, for poor *Jenny* has loſt by the Change of Hands very ſenſibly.

Thus for his Simile's: *Dumont* is ſur priz'd that *Jenny* will go to her Retirement, and being heartily rejoyc'd at it, he makes a long *Simile* of Ten Lines, as much to the purpoſe as if he had ſaid nothing.

*Dap.* 'Gad you are the ſtrangeſt Critic I ever met with, I warrant you don't admire the Stile.

*Free.* I ſpeak for my part that I do not, 'tis a ſort of *Motley*, *Linſey Woolſey* Stile, *Gloſter* has, by his *Holydame*, and St. *Paul*, and many of *Shakeſpear*'s Words, but the reſt ſpeak generally in the Stile of the Moderns.

*Dap.* Why, I believe the Poet deſign'd that, for he has directed the Dreſs of *Gloſter* and *Jane* to be of thoſe Days; but thoſe of all the other Players to be Modern.

*True.* I think it ſo far from a Recommendation, that it is written in the Stile of *Shakeſpear*, that it ought to damn it; *Ennius* and *Lucretius* were very much admir'd by the *Romans*, but it never came into the Head of *Virgil*, *Horace*, *Ovid*, *Tibullus*, or or the reſt, to write in imitation of the Stile of either of theſe Poets; the beſt Stile, is that which arrives to the Perfection of the Language then in Being, ſuch as is that of *Cato*, which is the beſt Standard of Dramatic Diction which we have in our Tongue.

*Enter Sir* Indolent *and Mr.* Bays.

Sir *Ind. Entring to Mr. Bays.*] No, no two very Honeſt, Worthy, Ingenious Gentlemen as live you may depend on't, and much your humble Servants.

*Bays.* That Coxcomb *Dapper* told me they were *Critics*, and that they damn'd all my Plays.

Sir *Ind.* *Dapper* is an honeſt Fellow but he is miſtaken indeed Mr. *Bays.* *To. Freeman*, let me bring you acquainted with Mr. *Bays*, the Laurel hangs over his Brow, and there it will fix e'er it be long.

*Free.* Sir your moſt Humble Servant.

*Bays.* Sir, I am yours.

*True.* Mr. *Bays*, I am glad to ſee the Man whom Fame has talk'd ſo loud of.

*Bays.* Sir, my Service to you. Confuſion to Critics. [*Drinks.*

*I met her as returning*
*In ſolemn Pennance from the Public Croſs;*
*Before her certain Raſcal Officers,*
*Slaves in Authority, the Knaves of Juſtice*
*Proclaim'd the Tyrant* Gloſter's *Cruel Orders.*
*On ether ſide her march'd an ill-look'd Prieſt,*
A Bob for the Clergy and Court too, egad.
*Who with ſevere and horrid haggard Eyes,*
*Did ever and anon by turn upbraid her,*
*And thunder in her trembling Ear Damnation.*
*Around her numberleſs the Rabble flow'd,*

*Shouldring*

*hould ring each other, crowding for a View,*
*aping and Gazing, Taunting and Reviling;*
*ome Pitying, but those alas! how few!*
*he most, such Iron Hearts we are, and such*
*The base Barbarity of Humane Kind,*
*Hooting and Railing, and with Villainous Hands*
*Gathering the Filth from out the Common Ways,*
*To hurl upon her Head.*

I vow this moves me so that I can't go on — Gentlemen, have you never observ'd our Barbarous Mob, how they use a poor Carted Bawd, or a Man in the Pillory, and the like?

*Free.* Oh! very inhumanely, Sir.

*Bays.* You must know, Sir, that there is about this Town, a poor unfortunate Creature call'd *Granny*, this poor Creature has been expos'd to the Blows and Buffets of outragious Fortune these many Years.

*True.* Very good Mr. *Bays* — What the Devil does he drive at *Jo?* [*Aside to* Free.

*Free.* May I succeed him in his Title if I can imagine. [*Aside to* True.

*Bays.* I have seen the Mob after her, heard her make a deplorable Moan, but the Mob threw Dirt at her; I thought it so pityful a sight, that I took the Hint of this Scene of *Jane Shore* from it; for thought I, if *Granny* with those plump Chops would touch me, how much more must *Jane Shore* who had not eat a bit of Bread in three Days.

*True.*

*True.* But Mr. *Bays*, I never found any thing but Laughter mov'd by all *Granny*'s Sufferings.

*Bays.* True, Sir, among the very *Canaille*; but I have often obſerv'd the *finer Spirits* of the Mob touch'd with Concern; nay, I have ſeen ſome Venerable Matrons check the Million (to uſe one of *Shakeſpear*'s Words) for their Rudeneſs, Incivility, and all that; now, thought I, if *Granny*, who has had three or four Baſtards, can engage the Concern of theſe Venerable Matrons, how much more muſt *Jane Shore*, for we do not find it on Record, that ſhe ever had ſo much as one Baſtard.

*Free.* I proteſt Mr. *Bays*, I fancy that *Granny*, manag'd by ſo able a Pen as yours, wou'd make a celebrated Tragic Character; beſides, tho' ſhe has had ſome Baſtards, yet her Innocence is not chargeable with the Folly, ſhe not having any Notion that playing the Whore is any Crime, much leſs a Scandalous one.

*Bays.* Why truly, I have had thoughts of making *Granny* a Tragic Heroine;

*Quidlibet audendi ſemper fuit æqua Poteſtas.*

becauſe we never had an Ideot profeſs'd for a Heroine; ſo that it wou'd be entirely New, and therefore cannot fail of ſucceeding,

ng, for as no Body before me eſtabliſh'd Whores for Heroines, ſo I dare believe, that o Body beſides my ſelf ever thought of n Ideot for one. Beſides, I have made me Steps and Advances, or rather De-cents towards this Character; my *Fair Penitent* was a Woman of Quality by Birth; Next I deſcended to *Jane Shore* a mere *Cit*, nd only diſtinguiſh'd from the Mob by her Adultery with *Edward*. Next I intend to make *Betty Sands* my Heroine, and ſo by degrees to come down to *Granny*, who hou'd be my *non plus ultra* in that Way.

*True*. Well but, Mr. *Bays*, what has made you alter your Mind? or do you re-olve it ſtill?

*Bays*. No—The very Reaſon you recom-mend her for, is the Reaſon of my reject-ing her, her *Innocence*; Whoring in her can ſcarce be call'd a Crime: But that is no Heroine for me, who does not play the whore knowingly, wittingly, and of choice. The Critics may talk of Art and Rules, and I know not what, but I am for Nature; I hate Art and Rule——

*True*. But, Mr. *Bays*, what do you mean by Nature?

*Bays*. Why, I call that Nature, when a Poet writes what he naturally thinks.

*True*. That is, Mr. *Bays*, whatever comes into your Head.

*Bays*.

*Bays.* Right, Sir, you know my meaning. I shou'd have made fine work indeed with *Jane Shore* if I had written according to Art. The Critics wou'd not allow her to be a Character to move Pity, a Character fit for Tragedy, and I know not how many good Morrows: But I find to my Comfort, that it is a very good Tragical Character, my Pocket knows it, and my Reputation too; for it has made my Bookfellers reprint all my Plays; except the *Biter*, on the Revival of my Fame, which had for some time lain dormant. I'll show you the force of Nature in me, which a Critic wou'd never have follow'd; for, Gentlemen, to raise Pity for poor *Jane Shore*, I bring in her Husband in the last Act, exclaiming against her Perfidy and her Ingratitude for his kind tender usage of her, for whom he thought nothing too good or too dear.

*True.* How! Mr. *Bays*, methinks that shou'd raise the Indignation of the Audience, not their Pity; because it aggravates her Guilt.

*Bays.* Oh! Sir, by no means; for I presently make him relent and pity her, nay, resolve to venture his Life to relieve her; and if he pity her so far, certainly others whom her Incontinence has not injur'd ought to pity her too. But to tell you the Truth, I had another Reason for this, and

that

hat was to bring in the Deſcription of her etting away from her Husband's Houſe in he King's Chariot.

*True.* Why, Mr. *Bays*, I thought Chaiots had been a more Modern Invention.

*Bays.* Phoo, what ſignifies that, it made ny Deſcription more beautiful than it cou'd ave been without a Chariot. For you muſt now, Gentlemen, that I think of ſome ne Scenes from the Beginning of the Play the End, and ſeveral fine Deſcriptions, nd then at laſt I make ſome tacking Scenes, hich finiſh my Play.

Sir *Ind.* Beſides, Mr. *Bays*, I believe you rought in that Deſcription to leſſen *Jane*'s uilt, by making her go with the King ith Reluctance.

*Bays.* No, hang it, that was too late, hen I had given her ſo much pleaſure in eſcribing her paſt Loves, and Regret at playing the Whore ſhou'd be ſo infaous. I never trouble my Head much out a Plot, for to tell you the Truth, the ore I think of that, the worſe I make it; nd therefore I reſolve to write my next ithout any Plot at all.

*Free.* I think you have made pretty good dvances that way, Mr. *Bays*.

*Bays.* Tolerable I think.

*True.*

*True.* Did you ever read the *Rehearſ*
Mr. *Bays?* Methinks all Dramatic Poe
ſhou'd be Maſter of that Farce.

*Bays.* I have made my Advantage of
I aſſure you, Sir, for I have conſider
what is there ridicul'd pleas'd at that tim
and by Conſequence will pleaſe again.

*True.* So inſtead of being taught by *Sm*
and *Johnſon*, you are inſtructed by *Bays*.

*Bays.* Right, Sir, and I have Copied m
moſt taking things from this *Brentford* Tr
gedy: I write to pleaſe the Town, Si
and if I do that, 'tis more than any of th
Critics can do. You find that the Tow
at the ſame Time they went to the *R*
*hearſal*, went to ſee thoſe very Plays th
were ridicul'd in it, and applauded the
Rants and Rhime, and all that.

*Free.* But, Mr. *Bays*, 'tis as certain, th
upon this Dramatic Criticiſm the Poe
alter'd their Method, and left off the
Rants and their Rhimes, and endeavour'
to come more into Nature.

*Bays.* Every one to his Taſte, you ma
talk of *Art* as long as you will, but I a
ſure I have a better Art of getting Ap
plauſe than can be learn'd from all th
Rules of *Ariſtotle*, *Horace*, or any other o
the Demagogues of *Parnaſſus*.

*True.* Is it a Secret, Mr. *Bays?* If it ma
be communicated, you may do a youn
Ma

Man a Kindneſs who may perhaps venture to Write.

*Bays.* To ſhow you, Sir, that I am Communicative, I will tell you how I do ſecure Succeſs; On one ſide, I pick out ſome of the ſmootheſt and moſt ſonorous Lines in my Play, ſome of the beſt *Simile's* and Deſcriptions, and theſe I repeat about to all I meet, thus applying to their Judgment, I impoſe a liking on them, and theſe ſhining Parts give a great Idea of the Whole; ſo that coming with this Prepoſſeſſion, they muſt be pleas'd, and they engage the Reſt; this is but one of my Rules of *Expectation.*

*True.* So you call theſe the Rules of *Expectation.*

*Bays.* True, Sir; Again —— you muſt know the Players have me in great Admiration, and I muſt needs ſay do me Juſtice; ſo they not only dreſs my Play well, which is a conſiderable Advantage, but cry it up about two Months before it comes on; and this has great influence on many of the Audience. But in *Jane Shore* I had ſome accidental Helps to *Expectation*, my *Bookſeller*, and ſome others of that Trade, in hopes to get by my Name, publiſh five or ſix ſorts of *Lives of Jane Shore:* This brought all who had bought the Lives, and ſecur'd all who uſe to come to Plays; ſo if every one of thoſe come but once, it muſt give my

Play, a conſiderable Run. And then 'tis not one Farthing matter whether it pleas'd or not; I did my buſineſs by it, and that's enough I think.

Sir *Ind.* You have forgot one thing Mr. *Bays*, the Favour of Men of Quality; for a Man may Write till Doomſday if they don't favour him, he'll ſcarce make much of the matter.

*Bays.* Ah! Sir *Indolent*, I am the happieſt Man alive in that, for I have not only the Favour of the Men of Quality, but of the Ladies too —— 'egad I believe I can't diſoblige them; I told them formerly that they were all like my *Fair Penitent*, and *Jane Shore* tells them they are all now like her, and therefore ought to pity her Caſe; yet you ſee how they flock to my Play.

*Free.* You are a happy Man Mr. *Bays*; Here's to your Health Sir.

*Bays.* By no means Sir, pray to the Ladies who advance *Jane Shore*.

*Free.* What *Dapper* aſleep! Come you muſt go with me, I am to meet ſome Players to Night about finiſhing a Play left imperfect by a Man of great Genius. Let me ſee ——'tis much about the Hour —— Gentlemen, your moſt faithful humble Servant; Sir *Indolent* yours. [*Exit* Bays *and* [Dapper.

Sir

Sir *Ind.* Nay I must be going this Minute *Jo*, and *Dick*, your faithful Servant.

[ *Exit Sir* Indolent.

*Free.* Faith *Bays* is something in the right on't, Fame is dispens'd by the Ignorant; And to what purpose then shou'd a Man of Judgment spend his time to expose himself to the World, when if he meets with Success, he is but on the Level with such a Writer as this, whose Plays have no one quality of the *Drama*, but are a strange Medley of Grotesque Figures that cannot be brought to any Form or Regularity.

*True.* The Truth on't is, to write Plays now, when the Fate depends on the Players and the Common Audience, can only be excus'd by Necessity. If ever the *English* Court can produce a *Richelieu*, this noble Province of Poetry may thrive and be reform'd.

*Free.* We are more likely to find his Cunning than his Wisdom in our Statesmen; who have never yet thought the Poets Letters worthy their Favour.

*True.* If any such bright Genius shou'd arise, we shou'd have no more *Dappers* nor *Bays*'s to expose the Folly of the Nation to Forraigners who have a juster Taste. Here Drawer call a Coach.

*Draw.* There is one at the Door Sir.

*True.*

*True.* Come I'll ſet you down, I g
your Door. What my Lord *Rocheſter*
of Report or common Fame, will hold
the Poetic Fame:

*There's not a thing on Earth that you can Na*
*So fickle and ſo falſe as vulgar Fame.*

Come you're next the Door, no Ceremo
[*Exeunt Om*

*Draw.* You're welcome Gentlemen.

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*FINIS.*